



/indow the World





Baptist Theological Seminary Library Prague Czech Republic





A happy and peaceful New Year to all our readers. As promised, **m**h enjoys a fresh look with an expanded content

for 1996, and much of the inside is in colour. We welcome Steve Chalke, television personality and Baptist minister, to our team of specially commissioned writers; he'll be contributing a regular column to challenge and inform. John Passmore, the BMS Europe representative, brings wit and humour to a new column with some tales of the unexpected ...

And David Pountain adds strength to the **m**h ideas section courtesy of some fascinating research. Every month, **m**h focuses on a country in which BMS is working and on an issue to make you think and inspire you to pray. In fact, we hope you find the whole magazine provides you with fuel for prayer support for

those who have answered the call to make Jesus known

throughout the world. Richard Wells

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Cover story	
WHO IS S	ENDING WHOM
	s looks at world mission
204 years at	ter Carey 4
Feature	
(HANDS A	CROSS THE SEA
	ope and beyond, Clive Doubleday 8
News Section	
FOREIGN	AND HOME NEWS
Take a look a	t the world from a global perspective 11
Centre Page	
	ORDINATORS)
	ple who promote the work of BMS 18
Wicot the pot	pie who promote the work of bido
Country Foci	S *
MH LOOI	
-	gives a overview of the nation 20
Resource Se	
	ID OPINIONS)
Facts, figure	s and background
Personal pra	(er
	WHAT TO PRAY FOR
	st: Information and prayer points
	ssionaries around the world
Action Team	E. Life after training
John Passmo	70
BACK TO	NATHRE.
0	re steps out of the bushes 34
JUIII I assiii	re steps out of the busiles
Waves	
AN INDE	PENDENT VIEW)
John Weaver	looks at this month's theme
	*
IN THE NEXT	CCIIF
	G CULTURES)
	arian Rudall on top of the world
THUIR GIRG IVI	Train Radan on top of the world
COUNTRY	FOCUS
Zaire and Ar	gola PLUS supporting features
FRONT COVE	: Hands across the communist divide.

Christian for baptism in the sea.

BMS missionary Ryder Rodgers prepares a new Albanian



Hands across the world



Had you told him as he boarded at Dover on June 13, 1793, that thousands, inspired by his sacrificial commitment to the Messianic challenge of Matthew ch28, v19, would embark on similar voyages across the globe, he might have looked with humble disbelief.

The truth is that this first "action team" from the new Baptist Missionary Society, of Carey, his family and veteran medical missionary Dr John Thomas, was to set an example to the world.

Through the ensuing two

centuries the torch they carried for "sharing the gospel of saving grace with the heathen" was to pass not only to the British who answered the call to go to the unevangelised world, but on to those who would hear the gospel through those missionaries and take up the challenge to carry the message onwards.

Today, were you to chart the progress of mission on a world map, your arrows from Britain to foreign parts would be joined by arrows from those nations to other countries across the globe. As the 21st century approaches,

And it is still the God-inspired passion which drove Carey to leave a successful pastorate at Harvey Lane, Leicester, to share the gospel in India, which motivates. In the very country Carey pioneered the BMS work, there is a thriving mission work reaching out to neighbouring territories.

Since 1968 the Zoram Baptist Mission has co-ordinated the mission outreach of the Baptist Church of -



 Mizoram, once a district of north-east India and, since 1972, an official state. Significantly, the fledgling Zoram Baptist Mission became active just as the door was closing in that part of India to the Western missionary presence owing to political instability. The last BMS missionaries to leave — Edith Maltby and Joan Smith, nurses at Serkawn Christian Hospital brought to an end 74 years of activity by the society pioneered by J H Lorrain and F W Savidge in 1894.

Now on their own, the Mizo Christians grasped the baton and ran with it. Joy Knapman, BMS Asia Representative, says: "These people may be quiet and unassuming but they have a passion for mission. They believe God has chosen them to be bearers of the gospel to the world."

For the Mizos, the world started on their doorstep and in the first 20 years of their mission society they had called 88 home missionaries to work with non-Mizos in Mizoram and 50 to work in India. With 18 in training and other home ministers, the 41,076-strong Mizoram Baptist community was supporting 581 full-time workers.

Between 1971 and 1988 the mission recorded 12,000 baptisms and 100 new church plants, and its working plan for the years to the turn of the millennium is a progressive strategy for evangelism in neighbouring India, Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand and Nepal.

In 1996 the Mizos' vision has lost none of its zest, propelling them forward with church planting projects, sending out evangelists, leadership training and refresher training for leaders. Theirs is a process which does not stand still; when a church has been established by a Mizo missionary, they move him or her on to plant another church. The emphasis is on training for native workers to replace them.

The BMS, on which the Zoram Baptist Mission is modelled, supports the Mizos as they eagerly tackle the challenges. With BMS funding Ringa and Diki Lalringa and Tlana and Laldinpii Laltlankima are serving in Nepal with the United Mission.

With an equal passion for mission on the other side of the globe the Brazilians and not standing still. The slow growth in the first 60 years from its birth in 1907, during which the World Mission Board of the Brazilian Baptist Convention placed missionaries first in Portugal, then in Bolivia and later in Paraguay, belies the clarity of vision which they have held since the first Baptist church met in Salvador in October 1882.

Once Brazilian Baptist missionaries set foot in their fourth field, Mozambique in 1971, it seemed to set in motion a period of rapid expansion and during the 1970s Uruguay, Argentina, Venezuela, Spain and Canada received missionaries from the South American giant. By the 1990s there remained only two South American nations to be reached by the Brazilians; Suriname and French Guiana are still priorities.

Today, with the urge to reach unreached people across the world, and a 10-year strategic plan to match, the Brazilian Baptist World Mission Board is not only continuing the break new ground but also consolidating existing work, training national Christians to reach areas and cross cultural barriers

The passion for outreach is driven by an expectation of great things from God — an echo of the historic words spoken by **William Carey**

which would take foreign workers vears to accomplish.

In all this the BMS provides not only financial support for Brazilian missionaries, but experienced people. BMS missionary David Brown plays a key role in administration, personnel and training at the World Mission Board in Rio de Janeiro.

"The Lord continues to call many," says David, echoing the passion for mission still ablaze in the heart of the Brazilian Christian. "But the financial burdens are very great and we're only able to send a small number of new workers every year. But the work is the Lord's and so are the riches of the world; our task is to remain faithful."

Where will it all lead? Next we'll be seeing evangelised people evangelising their own nation!

And that is what is in its infancy in Indonesia, a product of a movement of the Holy Spirit in the tribal areas of Asia during this last decade of the 20th century. Joy Knapman, who first visited Muslim-dominated Indonesia for the BMS in 1992, speaks of the powerful vision held by the Kerapatan Gereja Baptis Indonesia (Convention of Indonesian Baptist Churches).

"Their vision is to evangelise the whole of Indonesia – that's 13,000 islands with 180 million people," says Joy. "But they're only a small group and they're going to need help from other Christians." Thus a partnership with the BMS was born.

Working with the support of Baptists from Britain, Australia, the USA and Canada, the 2,000-member Indonesian Baptist convention has started work to plant a church in every district of the nation's 27 provinces. The Indonesians see the involvement of Britain and Australia as an answer to prayer for a "Macedonian call" to foreign mission agencies to partner them in a work on Sumatra, an island of eight provinces and a population of just over 36 million.

Joy was clearly touched by their response to such a mammoth challenge, reflecting a passion for outreach driven by an expectation of great things from God as they attempt to enlarge their borders.

Carrying the torch onwards, living expectantly and attempting big things echo the powerful message Carey gave the Northamptonshire Baptist Association 204 years ago in May 1792: "Enlarge the place of thy tent and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine inhabitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes..."

To Carey, who expected God was about to do great things by extending the kingdom of Jesus throughout the globe, it followed that Christians were bound to go big for God. Fuelled by this expectation, he thundered words which have rung in the hearts of many a Christian since: "Expect great things, attempt great things."

And they have.



Aid for the Romanians

THE TRANSFORMATION OF EASTERN EUROPE SIX YEARS AGO BROUGHT A FLOOD OF AID, BUT WHAT OF THE POSITION IN 1996? CLIVE DOUBLEDAY THROWS DOWN TODAY'S CHALLENGE

ver the past six years, the world has witnessed a radical transformation throughout Eastern
Europe, which has had a profound effect upon every aspect of its society – politically, economically, socially and not least spiritually.

To deduce that the collapse of Communism has merely created political change in Eastern Europe would be a gross understatement. The advent of Gorbachev led to hopes that the attitudes of the East European satellite governments would soften with time, but the general opinion was that things would change only when the present generation of hard-liners, the old guard, had died or retired.

In 1989 the face of Europe changed forever, as government after government collapsed like a house of cards under the brave pressure of the people's revolution demanding that democracy replace dictatorship. This domino effect swept through Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania. The following year the fight for freedom behind the Iron Curtain spread to Albania, former Yugoslavia, Russia and the former Soviet Union

satellite countries.

The primary response of Western churches to this open door of opportunity has been a reactive one, as initially individuals, churches, associations and unions rallied to transport aid to these desperately needy families and churches in the East. In 1990 it seemed that all roads led to Romania.

Undoubtedly, many mistakes were made through lack of co-ordination and indeed co-operation between independent and insular churches and organisations. It was not uncommon for trucks loaded with aid to arrive in Romania without any contact or true destination point for their precious cargo.

Naively some aid was off-loaded at the front door of orphanages and immediately disappeared out of the back door and on to the black market to earn the leaders and staff of the orphanage a handsome profit, without But encourage one another daily as long as it is called 'today' Hebrews 3:13.



the children ever seeing one item of aid. Fortunately, these reports were not as common as the media would have us believe and most of the aid was gratefully received, checked, lists made and distributed carefully and wisely, particularly if the recipient was a pastor of a local church.

During those early euphoric months of freedom in 1990, there was a wonderful time of fellowship among the fraternity of truck drivers into Romania or while staying in the large city hotels, courtesy of the Romanian government, with hundreds of aid workers, reporters, TV crews and medical teams.

While waiting at the Hungarian-Romanian border, it was not uncommon to be in a queue of 100 or 200 lorries waiting for documentation approval, guarded by machine-guncarrying Romanian soldiers. The unique international fellowship among Christians from Sweden, England, France, Switzerland, America and every Western country imaginable was as rewarding as the fellowship enjoyed with our Eastern European Christian brothers and sisters.

It is amazing to realise that over two years - while still a full-time student at Spurgeon's College - I had the joy of being involved in delivering £,1 million-worth of donated aid to Baptist pastors and churches who distributed it to the needy. Similar expeditions and trips in subsequent years have been made to Albania, Bulgaria, Poland, Russia and more recently former Yugoslavia.

After six years the world's focus and spotlight have moved on to other countries and crises, and much of the reactive aid support has long since ceased.



Today, a very small percentage of Christians, churches and missionary organisations support our Eastern European brothers and sisters. The long-awaited change in Eastern Europe has not brought the hoped-for economic rebirth and instant relief to poverty, and there is much disillusionment and despondency among the

Today, a very small percentage of Christians, churches and missionary organisations support our Eastern European brothers and sisters.

once-hopeful Eastern Europeans. Young people throughout Eastern Europe dream of amassing a sufficient amount in American dollars to travel to the West for education, employment and eagerly sought-after wealth.

What the East needs now is

equipping, encouraging and enterprising projects, both socially and spiritually. The old premise still applies: "If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. If you teach a man how to fish, you feed him for life." Those tireless and determined individuals, churches and missionary organisations who have been faithfully committed in their equipping and encouraging programmes are to be commended.

More than two-thirds of European Baptists are to be found in Eastern Europe and they still desperately need our encouragement, as they proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to their fellow countrymen. Throughout Eastern Europe at present there is a tremendous battle for the mind and soul, as every modern religion and cult peddles its belief and prescription for happiness and meaning to life.

Theologically trained pastors and church leaders need to be equipped in the handling of God's Word to enable the amazing growth and church



planting that has taken place throughout Eastern Europe to be sustained in the decades and centuries that lie ahead. Creative Christian social, medical, educational, employment and child care enterprises are to be encouraged, as churches and people equip themselves for the future.

Throughout any workable relationship there needs to be integrity, accountability and mutual respect for any East-West project to be successful. As the West gives of its wealth and abundant experience, we should be prepared to receive lessons in spiritual fervour, commitment, humility and insight from our long-suffering brothers and sisters, and, as partners in Christ, work together for the glory of God and the furtherance of His Kingdom.

Revd Clive Doubleday, BA, is the minister of Poverest Road Baptist Church, Petts Wood, Kent and a member of the Baptist Missionary Society General Committee. Clive Doubleday meets children at a Romanian orphanage



He's big. He's bold. He's built like a steamroller and he's not used to losing. But interestingly, when I met former All Black star Va'aiga Tuigamala, he told me that he sees his role here in the UK firstly as a Christian missionary and only then as a Wigan rugby player.

Two months ago, a South African couple appeared on Good Morning with Anne and Nick to explain to us all their God-given vision to launch a Christian satellite TV station designed to re-evangelise the whole of Europe.

The other day, I met a Nigerian couple who told me they were missionaries to Peckham.

And, of course, both Morris Cerullo and Reinhard Bonke have chosen to include Britain in their recent high profile evangelistic campaigns.

Forty years ago, sitting at the heart of an Empire, it was all so simple. We Brits knew the truth, others didn't and it was our job to go and tell them. In a game of them and us, we were us and everyone else was them

Then came Billy Graham. And in the 1950s, many British Christians, especially leaders, found it extremely difficult to stomach the ideas of an American telling us what the gospel was and how to make it known. Little did they know that Billy would be just the first in a flood of foreign preachers, teachers, evangelists and missionaries to view this country as a harvest field God has called them to work in.

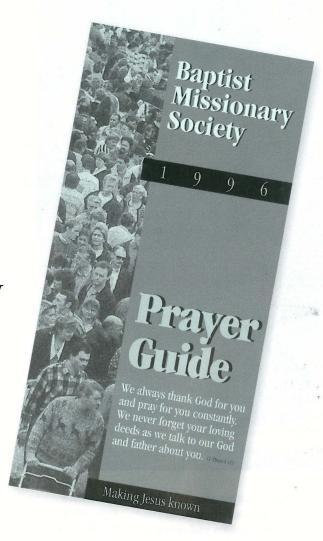
So what can be learned from this Great Reversal and those who have come to help us from around the world?

Firstly, we can learn from their presence. Because we are Christians, we have something to say and we want to say it. Indeed, it goes far deeper than that: we have been entrusted with a message it's our duty to share. We are called to speak out. We cannot keep silent. But as a result of this, we have become naturally better at giving than receiving; better at talking than listening. We need to learn again how to listen and to receive. We need to learn a new humility and this is a wonderful opportunity to do so.

Secondly, we should learn from their enthusiasm. It's hard to avoid the conclusion that timidity and pessimism are killing some of our churches and crippling many others. We have often been so apologetic about our faith that we have lost our distinctiveness and, in effect, ceased to be the "salt" and "light" we exist to be.

Thirdly, we must learn from their mistakes. Tragically, some (though by no means all) of this new missionary activity is carried out with the same disrespect for local culture that we ourselves have sometimes exhibited elsewhere in the world. It's disturbing to find yourself at the receiving end of irrelevant and insensitive evangelism which doesn't hold itself truly accountable to the indigenous church and creates more problems than it solves. Perhaps this experience will help us to think even harder about our overseas mission partnerships than we do already. Steve Chalke is General Director of Oasis Trust.

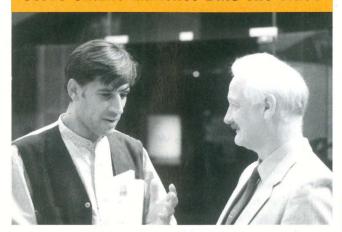
I need help to pray effectively for those in the front line of world mission



Please send me a BMS Prayer Guide

I would like Prayer Guide(s) and I enclose a cheque for £...... payable to the Baptist Missionary Prayer Guides are £1.00 each (inc p&p). Post this form with your payment to: BMS, PO Box 49, Baptist House, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA.

Steve Chalke launches BMS The Video



THE MAN DRIVEN INTO FULL-TIME CHRISTIAN WORK BY A PASSION FOR TELLING PEOPLE ABOUT JESUS SET A DYNAMIC TONE AT THE NATIONAL LAUNCH OF THE NETWORK BMS, THE NEW VIDEO CONCEPT IN COMMUNICATING WORLD MISSION TO CHURCHES.

uest keynote speaker Steve Chalke stood in London's National Film Theatre and told invited guests before the premiere screening that the new video, You Can Make the Difference, was breaking fresh ground; it dispelled a myth that was alive when he was a child that if you WANTED to work full-time for God, it surely couldn't be his will!

He recalled Sunday school tales of missionaries on furlough visits who appeared as ordinary people — nothing like the superhuman images conjoured in small boys' imaginations - and who hadn't WANTED to be missionaries, but God had SENT them...to places like the Congo. And they didn't look too excited about it, he said.

"So every Sunday school kid grew up with the idea that they were in this terrible place called the Congo, sent out for years at a time by those awful people at the BMS," said Steve.

And there was his dilemma. As a desire for communicating the gospel grew in Steve over the years, he was beset by the mental picture of a God whose will was to send people who didn't want to go. "But I wanted to do it,

and I thought this meant it wasn't God's will," he said. "If I DIDN'T want to do it, then it probably WAS God's will.

"It took a long time to work through this misconception of mission work," he admitted. "This video is an important tool because it helps to dispel these myths. Among adults around our churches is an unhealthy image of mission. I believe there's little understanding that mission is a partnership between local churches and churches around the world."

The video presents in a TV current affairs style a programme illustrating the value of church members' active involvement in prayer, financial and practical aspects of mission, using examples from churches in Scotland, Wales and England. It is available, priced f,7.95 including a free illustrated teaching manual, from BMS Didcot.

Steve Chalke a Baptist minister, is director of the Oasis Trust and appears regularly on breakfast television.



New guidelines for care

Fresh policy and guidelines for pastoral care of missionaries have been adopted following a year-long research project by a BMS working group chaired by Alan Pain, minister of Sutton Coldfield Baptist Church.

The group's research explored pastoral needs, examined the current care and collated information from a comprehensive questionnaire to missionaries.

Presenting the group's 10-page report to the BMS General Committee, Alan Pain highlighted the shared pastoral duties of sending churches, partner churches, BMS co-ordinators, regional representatives, training colleges and missionaries themselves.

"We're concerned in this report with improvement, being more specific, precise and practical," he said.

General Committee members expressed concern about the workability of suggested guidelines, principally those involving BMS regional representatives in a six-monthly missionary visitation programme.

BMS Director for Missionaries Sian Williams says it is recognised that the means of providing care will depend on missionaries' locations and accessibility and while regiona representatives will not be able to provide all of the suggested pastoral care personally, they will be responsible for overseeing that care is given.

Regional representatives have welcomed the new guidelines. Derek Rumbol, representative for Africa says: "They will help us to improve our pastoral care for missionaries and although they'll work out differently in different areas, I hope that missionaries will be better served as a result."

Top left: **Steve Chalke** discusses the BMS **Video with General Director Reg** Harvey Above: Alan Pain: **improved Care**

Fresh bid to WOW the youngsters

Dramatic changes to mission motivation for young people are introduced this month with the aim of educating youngsters about world mission. stimulating their interest and encouraging their participation.

The Window on the World club is the vehicle on which BMS is pinning its hopes of world mission inspiration for the sixes to thirteens.

It sweeps the traditional monthly Look magazine for children into a 21st century full colour support publication for club activities and resources which include, for each child who joins:

- * A large colour world map and 24 stickers to collect.
- * A summer action day.
- * A club badge.
- * An annual 44-page action pack of resources for leaders.
- * A new WOW fund-raising project.

"The WOW club will now have an open membership and be the umbrella for all our future children's work," says Phil.

Phil, who has spent the past six months preparing the club material, as well as working on resources for older

youth, says the club package will be supported by a children's video towards the end of the year.

Older youth work by the BMS will focus on a summer camp, a touring roadshow next year, a new year party to welcome 1997 and a new fund-raising project, as well as a youth culture video.

Phil, who has taken responsibility for BMS Action Teams, is aiming to

expand the project to embrace

UK Action Teams, more summer Action Teams and special Action Teams to accommodate young people whose poststudies plans are not confirmed until well after the qualifying date for the 28:19 overseas teams.

"Several youth leaders have said that children's and youth work has fallen behind and needs a higher and serious profile," says Phil. "We need to act quickly and positively if we're to effectively reach today's young people with the challenge of world mission."

Angola fund could help Zaire

The Charity Commission has been aksed to grant permission to widen the use of the BMS Angola Hospital Fund.

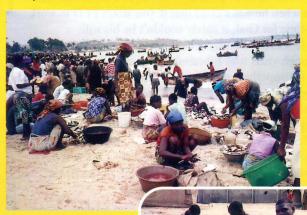
Sanction is required quickly to enable the fund to satisfy a pressing need in Zaire for repairs and renovation to hospitals run by the BMS partner church, the Baptist Community of the River Zaire (CBFZ), at Bolobo, where 500 children died of measles earlier this year, at Ntondo, Pimu and Yakusu.

Communication between these hospitals, necessary at the best of times but critical during epidemics such as the Ebola virus in May, is non-existent and BMS Director of Operations David Martin says that essential radios, computers and modems to allow national and international contact could be financed from the fund.

Some of the £400,000 in the fund may be needed for the rehabilitation of the hospital at Mbanza Kongo, in Angola, the original beneficiary, and for repairs and equipment at hospitals in the north of the country but because of the results of the long internal war landmines, civil unrest and impassable roads — it has not been possible to assess the needs.

BMS General Director Reg Harvey estimated that

the fund contained eight times as much as was required to satisfy the needs of Mbanza Kongo hospital.



Angola: People exist in a fragile peace



Confirmation for Candidates

Baptist minister Paul Ellis, his wife Linda, and staff nurse Susan Campbell are preparing for mission work with the BMS following their acceptance by BMS General-Committee. And the committee has also confirmed re-offers of service from John and Valerie Furmage.

For Paul (49) and Linda (51) there is a definite Belgium connection because his mother was born there and he feels a strong calling to take the gospel across the Channel.

Paul and Linda (right, top) say the stirrings of a call to

Belgium began in 1991 after a visit with his mother. Later a friendship developed with Samuel Verhaeghe, President of the Belgian Baptist Union, and the couple forged links between their church at Hemel Hempstead and Samuel's in Middelkerke.

The turning point in their lives came through Acts ch 16, v6-10. Paul says: "The apostle Paul found that various openings were being blocked by the Holy Spirit until he finally head the appeal from the man of Macedonia. Linda and I believe that this was clearly also the way for us."

After preparation courses they will start ministerial service in Belgium

Susan Campbell (32), who has been at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary since 1993, trained at Dumfries and Galloway College of Nursing and Midwifery with missionary work in view.

She married Gordon in 1985 and both felt the call to mission work. But tragically he died in a road accident three years later and Susan's route to mission work was put on hold. However, from 1992 Susan began to be involved in church youth ministries and led two Scripture

> Union camps. In 1993 she co-led a Task Force team for Tear Fund to Uganda and

a year later led a team to Brazil

Described by Joyce Wainwright, chairman of BMS Candidate Board, as a dynamic leader and pioneer, Susan feels the time is right to pick up the mission call again.

Susan, a member of Leven Baptist Church since 1991, studied at Glasgow Bible Training Institute and Liverpool Bible College, Ormskirk. She has been closely involved with HIV/AIDS and drugs work for Grampian Health Board.

> John and Valerie Furmage (left below) will return to pastoral work in South West Parana, Brazil, next August after four years at Fishergate Baptist Church, Preston. The couple came home from Brazil in 1990 after 19 years service and the following year John was called to the pastorate at Fishergate.

BMS Director for Missionaries Sian Williams spoke of the high esteem with which the couple were held in Brazil.



mh.

subscription

Some confusion

may have arisen

subscription revision, owing to

incorrect

information

published in

October's issue.

which had gone to press before

the details were

finalised. The

correct prices

the error.

appear on Page 3

of this issue and we apologise for

over the mh 1996

Family off to Asia

Former management accountant David Kerrigan and his wife, Janet, are due to fly to Sri Lanka with their family where David is to work as one of the BMS Asia representatives. He will relieve current Asia representative Joy Knapman of much of her workload, which has grown over the years as BMS activities have expanded and new partnerships formed.

David and Janet, whose re-offer of service was accepted by BMS General Committee in June, had been in ministry at Pinhoe Road Baptist Church, Exeter, since 1991. David trained at Spurgeon's College and spent his student pastorate at Forest Row Baptist Church in East Sussex.





Christine Neilson — Off the shelf

The New Year means new publications from the BMS.

The new video, You Can Make the Difference - one of the Network BMS series - is proving very popular. At £7.95, including free workbook, the video is great value and can be used for personal viewing or to start a group discussion. It presents, in current affairs format, the strong partnership between Baptists in Britain and the global work of the BMS.

If you're into drama,

volume two of Fool's Gold How About it Mr Millman? — is well worth considering at just £6. It's a collection of 10 short plays with a mission theme and small groups will have great fun rehearsing and performing them.

Let's Take a Look at BMS is a free four-page leaflet aimed principally at young people, which tells the story of the society and brings you up-to-date using Globetrotter and Boomer, the new WOW Club

characters, and selected missionaries. Strong graphics make this leaflet very readable for all ages.

Watch out for Around the World in 80 Ways, the BMS's colourful new-look catalogue for 1996. It's a user-friendly guide to everything the BMS publishes for sale and hire. Many mission resources are free. And so is the catalogue!

 Call Christine, BMS Literature Secretary, on 01235 512077



A strong desire to extend the Baptist witness into Romania's underevangelised east has been expressed by the country's Baptist Union. Baptist work has been strong in western Romania and in the capital, Bucharest, but the east has very few Baptist churches.

Under their new general secretary, 40-year-old father of three Pastor Aurel Gacea, the strategy is to challenge strong, wealthy Baptist churches in western Romania to choose

areas in the south and west where they could begin church-planting and

Gacea, who is working closely with the Romania Baptist Union president Vasile Talos, says: "These churches could support missionaries in these places and provide a place to meet for the new congregations which will be established."

The general secretary, who feels he was elected because Baptists were looking for people interested in mission, is known for his heart for evangelism. He is pastor of one of the few eastern Baptist churches, at Tulcea.

Lost tribe setback in **Brazil**

A nine-year search by missionaries for a tiny lost Amazon tribe has been halted within sight of success. Government officials forced a team of three explorer-evangelists camping in the rainforest to leave a restricted area only days away from anticipated contact with the isolated Himarima people.

Youth With a Mission has been spearheading efforts to take the gospel to the small tribe. Efforts to trace the Himarima began in 1986 when the first team began exploring the remote jungle lands of the Amazon, since when several months-long expeditions have been made resulting in sightings from the air and traces on the ground.

The latest expedition found fresh footprints and discarded clay pieces around the Piranha River but

instead of meeting members of the tribe, they encountered government agency representatives who guard the vast region's isolated Indian groups from approaches by outsiders.

YWAM's Transcultural Ministry leaders, Braulia Ribeiro, based at Port Velho, Rondonia, says this setback was not only a disappointment but could create difficulties in working with other Indian groups. "Our workers

enter restricted areas because we fear that otherwise some of these small tribes could be destroyed before they ever get the chance to hear the gospel," he says.

The Himarima live nomadically, making temporary shelters in the trees and hunting or fishing for food.

Gratitude for children's holidavs

Baptists throughout Europe, who helped provide holidays for children suffering from radiation sickness, have recieved a letter of gratitude from the leaders of the Belarus Baptist Union.

For the past three years the European Baptist Federation (EBF) has sponsored the programme Children of Chernobyl which locates churches in Western countries willing to host holidays for children from Belarus and other areas affected by radiation fallout from the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe.

Hundreds of children have been helped so far and it is thought that even a onemonth respite from

> radiation is sufficient to improve the health of children.

Belarus Baptist churches, which support three missionaries working in children's hospitals and clinics, also contribute to their union's summer camp programme for the children in a former military base near Kobrin. However, further finance is needed to enable the 1996

camp programme to go ahead and the Belarus Baptist Union is also aiming to raise (US)\$30,000 to begin work on a second camp.

New moderator in North India

The Rt Revd Dhirendra K Mohanty has become the moderator of the Church of North India (CNI) following a decision by the Ninth Synod of the Church in Delhi. Bishop Mohanty, from a Baptist family, grew up in the state of Orissa where the denomination agreed to join the CNI when it was formed 25 years ago. He was Bishop of the Cuttack Diocese with which the BMS has special links.

Mutual recognition in Italy

The Italian Baptist Union has joined with two other protestant denominations the Methodists and Waldensians - to grant each other full and mutual recognition.

Recognition includes people, ministires, churches and "ordinamenti", which covers ecclesiastical practices, constitutions and by-laws, like, for example, believers' baptism.

Renato Maiocchi, president of the Italian Baptist Union, said no one wanted to create a rough copy or mixture of the diverse "ordinamenti" butthat a full recognition of each independent body should be achieved.

"We recognise that in the New Testament there are elements of both the presbyterian and congregational systems," he says. "Both have productive elements to be valued. This recognition allows each group to keep its own systems, regulations and ecclesiastical traditions but no longer will anyone say or think that one is inside and the other outside the Biblical perspective."

Bible studies stir Muslim interest

An advertising campaign inviting people to write in to learn more about Jesus has attracted interest in a Muslim republic in the former USSR.

Newspaper advertisements and television commercials - surprisingly uncensored - offering a free home study kit to respondents were reported to have "caused quite a stir" according to the Bible Correspondence Course organisers, a joint project between WEC (World Evangelisation for Christ) and Youth With a Mission (YWAM).

The course organisers say many Muslims are eager to learn about Christianity and the home study kit allows them to learn in private without fear of discovery or threat of being cut off from families.

In nearby Turkey up to 10,000 requests for the kit were received in a year and several churches have been planted. In this republic unnamed for security reasons - fewer than one per cent are Christians.

Poles celebrate recognition

Polish Baptists had cause to celebrate at their assembly. After more than two years of negotiations they had secured full legal status with the help of a Baptist Member of Parliament.

The new status enables Baptists to retrieve property which belonged to them before World War II, allows Baptist pastors the same tax status as Roman Catholic priests and opens the way for them to serve as chaplains.

The Polish Baptist Union comprises 61 churches; currently 18 congregations are without pastors and 16 Polish missionaries are working in new areas to establish churches.

UPDATE

LANDMINES

Whilst receiving quite a bit of media coverage on the day itself Action Day To Ban Landmines, 23 Sept 95, sadly did not have much effect on the corridors of power. David Davies, the Foreign Office minister, writing a week later, in the Guardian



"Why does the British government not support a total

The answer come back to reality. We want a policy which works - not one that simply catches the headlines. Landmines remain an effective defensive weapon. Our own armed forces have them and need them. If they had to do without landmines, our forces would be weakened. They would risk taking more casualties.

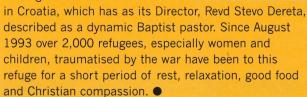
We do not believe it would be right to deny other responsible countries the right to have landmines too."

The UN Weaponry Convention meeting in Vienna, which coincided with the media coverage, was not able to reach any conclusion.

PICTURED ABOVE: Victim of a landmine blast learns to move around again (Christian Aid/NicDunlop)

REFUGEES

Four members of Victoria Baptist Church, Eastbourne, (pictured right) Ian Coupland, Steve Jupp, Antony and Maree Miles, and Baptist pastor Revd Oliver Vellacott from Caithness journeyed to Slovenia at the invitation of Pastor Izet Veladzic. As a church, Victoria Baptist have prayed for and supported Pastor Izet in recent years. Pastor Izet was brought up as a Muslim and he and his family have suffered persecution. They will also be visiting the Life and Peace Center







LEFT: Being a refugee at 20-20 Vision



Dates for your diary

If you are organising a world mission event open to visitors, and would like it publicised in this diary, please let us have details three months in advance. Write to: World Mission Link Diary, BMS PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA.

February 3/4

Salisbury Area Fellowship BMS Event Details: Gill Pembleton (Tel: 01722 412163)

March 2/3

Western Link-Up Group BMS weekend Details: Pauline Trounson (Tel: 01297 442583)

March 5

Newport and District WMA meeting and annual gift day Details: Kathleen Wilkie (Tel: 01633 894427)

Confessions from the World Mission Link Desk!

It is Friday and I don't appear to have a map of the town. Am I sure it didn't come in today's post? I'm speaking there on Sunday morning so I really ought to have some

Check the fax. That's it, it probably came by fax. No fax...

OK, I'll phone them.

No answer. No map. No directions. Help!

Still, I suppose this is better than not knowing which church I'm speaking at.

That's my colleague's problem...

He congratulated himself on the fact that he was really well prepared.

He had the hymns chosen, sermon written, the time of service clear.

He arrived at the church an hour before the service was due to start, pleased with his time management and map

"Welcome! Oh, by the way, could you do the children's talk?"

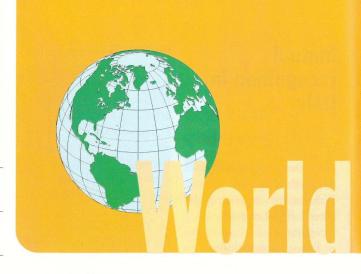
Don't

If you have booked a BMS speaker, please:

- wait until the week of the meeting before contacting the speaker.
- assume the speaker knows your church circumstances.
- expect them to always be at home when you ring.
- assume they will use a car.

Do

- contact your speaker at least two weeks beforehand.
- discuss the meeting and what you would like them to
- if you want them to choose worship songs, tell them which hymn book you use.
- check how they are travelling and give clear written
- make sure they know the time and length of the meeting.



even children who attend Pandy village chapel were so touched by the work being done by the school for blind girls and young women in Dhaka that they held a Bangladesh party to raise some money to support it.

The school features in this year's BMS Children's Project Deka Bangladesh for which the target of £4,000 has been broken already.

The seven children, aged between five and 13, sent invitations to every house in their village in the Ceiriog Valley, in Wales, and put posters up around the neighbouring village of Glyn Ceiriog.

Their party features stalls including cakes, brica-brac, platns, hot dogs, teas, a lollipop game and sweets. Village riding stable owner John Payne lent a pony for rides and parents and friends helped to man the stalls.

The party raised £280 for the blind school work.

More fund-raising for Bangladesh has been going on at Woodley Baptist Church near Reading, Berkshire. A Drop in the Bucket was their way of getting funds to families in Chittagong village. Their link missionary, Sue Headlam, wrote to the



church raising the plight of villagers who waited hours for their water buckets to fill, drop by drop. So they placed a bucket in the church foyer every Sunday and invited people to put their "drop in the bucket" in the form of loose change to help Sue's work.

The result: £551.16. At Tottenham Baptist Church, north London, Sunday school children were so shocked to learn of the plight of the youngsters of the "rag picking" village near Vellore, in southern India, that they asked teacher Janette Whitehead if they could hold a sale.

Janette says: "When they read in their BMS Look magazine that these Indian children had to sort through rubbish tips to find things to sell, they wanted to sell their old comics and toys, and cakes that they would make, to help them."

With donations, £237 was raised.

Inspiration, motivation, ideas, news on world mission for churches...

Mission Link





ABOVE:

A wave of thanks - complete with coloured buckets - from the children of Woodley Baptist Church TOP RIGHT:

A pupil at the Dhaka School for the Blind learns to read in Braille RIGHT:

St Thomas youngsters in their own favela shack

Inspiring the young

Envisioning young people for world mission is a challenge for any church. **Chris Binstead** explains how they tackle it at Exeter

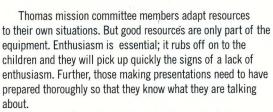
Over the past four years members of the Sunday Club at St Thomas Baptist Church, Exeter, have been on their travels - to Honduras, Nepal, the Seychelles and, most recently, Brazil. All this has been without a passport and, indeed, without leaving the church.

Once a term the seven to 11 age group is led by members of the church Mission Committee. These are sessions enjoyed not only by the children - who are learning something of mission and of what God is doing in the world - but by the regular teachers ... and the committee members.

Resource materials are readily available these days and speakers have in the past made

use of BMS Bubble and
Squeak packages - you say
what you need, the BMS
comes up with the
resources. With the launch
of the WOW (Window on
the World) Club, even
more resources will be
available. St Thomas
also use materials from
other mission
organisations, some of
which work in
partnership with the
BMS.

While readymade programmes are available, St



When the children travelled to Brazil recently, they looked at life in the favelas (shanty towns) and tried to build their own shanty houses. They thoroughly enjoyed this and experienced the frustration of roofs and walls falling down. They also realised the need to work together and probably learned more than had been anticpated when the lesson was being prepared.

The aim of the St Thomas mission sessions is that the youngsters will become world Christians, aware that "God so loved the world ..." and able to encourage older Christians to catch their vision.

A comment made by a seven-year-old from the group led to the organisation of a coach trip from the church to visit Logos II, thje Operation Mobilisation ship, when it docked at Southampton.

Children will enjoy learning that God is alive and active, and working through his people in the 1990s, worldwide. They will be excited by it and you will be encouraged. So why not introduce your Sunday Club to mission? ●

Chris Binstead is chairman of the Mission Committee at St Thomas Baptist

I've got a mission event on Brazil coming up and I'm
I've got a mission event on Brazil coming up and I'm
Expecting 80 teenagers. Our speaker's cancelled and
Expecting 80 teenagers. What can we do?

If you're a regular subscriber to the BMS Power Pack
Expecting 90 power Pack
Ex

The church has decided to have a monthly midweek

The church has decided to have a monthly midweek

mission prayer meeting. Any ideas?
mission provide you with the latest prayer letters from
BMS can provide you with the latest prayer letters from
BMS can provide you with the latest prayer letters from
missionaries across the globe and can put you on the
missionaries across the globe and can put you you li have a
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missionaries across the globe and can put you
missionari



Working Together for World Mis

Getting the message across

Teamwork is the key to a successful world mission church event. That's where BMS co-ordinators can make all the difference, says Andy Stockbridge

t the heart of BMS support are the local churches of Scotland, Wales and England. And to all but a handful, the resources of the BMS at Didcot might as well be a million miles

To bridge the gap and make those resources more accessible, BMS Coordinators work in partnership with churches and together for the promotion of world mission. As with any good partnership, all sides bring different skills, qualities and resources

Questions

How can I get more involved in world mission? I want to have a mission celebration - what can I do? Is God calling me to missionary service? What new materials, videos and resources are available? How can I get training as a mission speaker? What is PIPS and how do I find out more about it? Who can help me - I want to enthuse my church for mission?

> which together achieve much more than can be gained on their own.

The eight co-ordinators are strategically placed around the UK so that help with organising an event, booking a speaker, arranging a conference, or whatever, on a world mission theme, is never far away.

But with almost 3,000 churches to cover, personal visits don't happen very often. Instead, they're available to support church mission secretaries, organisers and leaders chiefly as enablers, encouragers, motivators, resource providers and advisers to make the difference to their church

As Alan Prosser, mission secretary at Oaklands Baptist Church, Surbiton, in Surrey, says of London and South East Co-ordinator Derek Mucklow: "He is an invaluable resource for me. He is always available for advice, he is a useful local source of information on the BMS and always keeps me informed of matters of direct interest."

Whether you are a mission secretary wanting to make a display for the church noticeboard, or a housegroup leader looking for a set of studies to use over a number of weeks, or a church speaker seeking additional world mission resources, help is just a telephone call away. Co-ordinators hold lists of speakers who can be invited to take part in a church world mission event on a Sunday or at a midweek meeting and local teams are being set up to help with larger meetings and events.

Display boards, self-help kits and leaflets on all aspects of BMS mission work in four continents are available from the local co-ordinator. And if you think God is calling you to be more active in your own church, or you are considering missionary service, then the local co ordinator should be the first person to contact.

Apart from their "product knowledge" - they know BMS inside out - co-ordinators are highly skilled communicators who make it their business to absorb local knowledge so that they can tailor-make the right promotional services for the right people to use in the right situations. The result is an economical use of time and resources.

Caroline McLuckie, missionary secretary of Oban Baptist Church says of Scottish Co-ordinator Derek Clark:

"Derek is an enthusiastic person. He is able to get people excited about the BMS when he speaks. It's easy for me to be excited but it's difficult to pass on that excitement."

Caroline looks forward to Derek's visit to her church: "I feel I wouldn't be able to get across in one meeting all the work in all the countries BMS does. Derek has a lot of things available - in one night he can get all the work across."

As well as their resource, information and encouragement roles, coordinators also provide training for World Mission Link contacts, mission secretaries and leaders.

Hundreds of world mission event organisers have already benefited from the co-ordinators'

Andy Stockbridge is BMS Director for Constituency Support

sion





Jim Clarke



Cath Mawson and Theo Lanbourne

Scotland

Derek Clark

41 Newton Road, Lenzie, Glasgow, G66 2LS Tel: 0141 775 1201



Gareth Hutchinson and Derek Mucklov

North England

Cath Mawson

49 Allerton Road, Bradford, BD8 0AY Tel: 01274 487341

Midlands

Theo Lambourne

13 Briar Walk, Oadby, Leics. LE2 5UE Tel: 0116 271 3633

Central and East England

Dingley Dell, Church Road, Wentworth, Ely, Cambs, CB6 3QE

Tel: 01353 778984

London and South East England

Derek Mucklow

51 Clandon Close, Epsom, Surrey, KT17 2NH Tel: 0181 393 6017

South and West England

Phil Hindle

Rosebank, Sheep Street, Chipping Campden, Glos, GL55 6DR

Tel: 01386 840238 (moving in 1996)

North and Mid Wales

Delyth Wyn Davies Borth Rd, Porthmadog, Gwynedd, LL49 9UP

Tel: 01766 512957

South Wales

Gareth Hutchinson

20 Southward Lane, Langland, Swansea, SA3 4QU

Tel: 01792 360909



PHIL HINDLE

The new BMS co-ordinator for the South and South West is Chipping Cambden Baptist Church Deacon, Phil Hindle.

He says:

"Having spent more than 20 years in telecommunications, computing and banking, I felt that the time had come for a change from the business world. The opportunity arose to apply for this post with the BMS and Christine, my wife, and I gave this careful consideration, worried that it may have been just a mid-life crisis. But the Lord's calling was very clear!
"I am excited about this change and my hope for the future in this region is that we will see growth in prayer, emotional and financial support for the BMS, with each church developing a deep and lasting interest in the society's work. am looking forward to developing friendships in as many churches as

possible.
"If time allows, I also hope to be able to continue my hobbies outside working hours, of reading, gardening and riding my trials motorbike."

Phil and Christine hope to move to the Taunton area in the New Year.



DELYTH WYN DAVIES

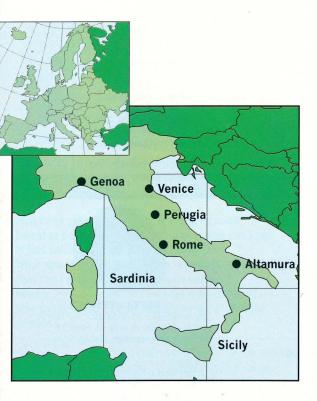
The new BMS co-ordinator for North and Mid-Wales is wife of Baptist Minister and teacher, Delyth Wyn Davies.

She says:

"Cyfarchion o Gymru! Greetings from Wales. I was brought up in the seaside town of Llandudno, which is fairly anglicised but Welsh was the language of our home. Our family attended a small Welsh Presbyterian Chapel where I enjoyed going to Sunday school and playing the organ. After completing a degree course in education at The Normal College, Bangor, I taught in a few primary schools in the area.
Throughout this time I felt a call to do Christian work with children and spent much of my time doing this voluntarily. "I was then appointed Children's Work Organiser with the Presbyterian Church of Wales Youth Service and during the eight years I became involved in mission education. Now I look forward to serving God in this new role and to the challenge of enthusing those in local situations to put mission work high on their churches' agenda. My main hope is to see churches looking outward and discovering the thrill and enrichment of being involved in the work of the church throughout the world."



BEGINNING A NEW SERIES IN WHICH JAN KENDALL TAKES A CLOSER LOOK AT SOME OF THE COUNTRIES IN WHICH BMS HAS A WORKING INTEREST





uperficially Italy is very religious, with churches everywhere. The Vatican is in the centre of Rome, but although Roman Catholicism has its hold, most only have a nominal allegiance and their outlook is basically secular. Others, disillusioned with the church have sought refuge in Marxism, the cults or witchcraft. Only 1,500 of Italy's 33,000 communities have an established evangelical witness.

In 1984 Roman Catholicism ceased to be the state religion, and all religions now have equal freedom. However the Protestant church is still weak, and considered a foreign sect, despite the existence of the Waldensian Church, the world's oldest Protestant denomination.

At present BMS has three missionary couples working in Italy:

Ann & David MacFarlane

Ann & David are based at Altamura, in the southern tip of Italy, (near the top of the heel on the 'boot'). They come from Scotland and their home church is Falkirk Baptist. Before going to Italy David, who is a minister, worked as a residential social worker. They are in Italy with their three children, Diann aged 19, David aged 18, and Elizabeth aged 14.

Mark & Claire Ord

Mark and Claire are members of Clapham Baptist Church. Mark had previously spent a year with Oasis and

British Youth for Christ and had been a youth worker for his local authority. He'd also been a home help, and been involved in church work, and completed his theology degree from Spurgeon's College in 1993.

Claire has a degree in history, worked as an assistant careers officer and has undertaken part-time theological studies at Spurgeon's.

They have a daughter, Elizabeth, aged two.

Just over a year ago they started their language study in preparation for work in Italy. When Mark wrote the following article they had only been in Genoa three weeks.

GENOA

One hundred and fifty years ago Charles Dickens described Genoa as "a place that grows upon you every day. It abounds in the strangest contrasts, things that are picturesque, ugly, mean, magnificent, delightful and offensive, break upon the view at every turn."

Although we have lived in the city for only three weeks, the description seems to have worn well.

Looking across the port the buildings which stand out from the crush of flats and houses range from ancient cathedrals to disused dockside warehouses to glistening, new high rise office complexes. The overall impression is that this ancient city has seen better days.

Genoa is Italy's fifth largest city and is home to around one million people.

It feels typically, chaotically Italian. Baptists form a very small part of the community, even the Christian community, which is of course, predominantly Roman Catholic. There are two Baptist churches with a combined attendance of less than 100 people. Unfortunately both churches will lose their pastors by next easter as they are due to retire.

Given this, it was exciting to be at church twice on Sunday (normally there is only one service) and find it packed to capacity on both occasions. In the morning three young people were baptised and the church was crammed with church and family members, friends and people from other Protestant churches in the city. The feeling of crampedness was heightened by the fact that the entire congregation had to move downstairs for part of the service to a room which houses the baptistry.

In the sermon the pastor, a former Roman Catholic priest whose son had

Facts and figures

Religious allegiances

Roman Catholic 78% Protestant 1% Non religious 18% (almost all were baptised in the Catholic church) Orthodox 1% Sects eg Jws, Mormons 1% Muslim 2% (Figures have been rounded, so do not make 100%)

Population:

57,868,000 (1994); estimate for year 2000 58 million

Children per woman: 1.3 (1991) Health services: One doctor per every

210 people

Calorie consumption: 138% of

required intake

Literacy 98% male; 96% female Communications: 106 newspapers, 421 TV sets & 791 radio receivers per 1,000 people

Economy: Annual growth 2.2% Annual inflation 9%

(1980-92)

just been baptised, told us how on the night of his son's birth he had run through the streets of the city shouting that he had a son. He was so animated that you half expected him to do the same about his son's baptism. He preached so loudly that I imagine half of Genoa got the message.

In the evening the church was full again, this time with young people. It was the Baptist church's turn to host the monthly youth service. The church was transformed; the organ was hidden behind a huge amplifier and an OHP screen, and along the front of the platform was a row of microphones which fortunately had not been available to the morning's preacher. The whole service was led and enjoyed by young people from virtually all the churches in Genoa: Baptists, Methodists, Waldensians, Roman Catholics, Pentecostals, Brethren and Adventists. It is difficult to imagine such a gathering taking place in Britain. In this large and diverse group the feeling of being in such an extreme minority is quelled for a time - which I imagine is part of the idea.

It was a good day and such occasions will be as important to us as to any protestant in Genoa. A welcome antidote to the difficulties of bearing a credible witness to Jesus in a city, and a country for that matter, which looks on most Protestant churches as sects. A fact that was brought home to me when I was looking for a flat in Genoa. On hearing I was a Baptist, the estate agent asked if I would be performing any strange ceremonies in the flat, and ended by asking me if I believed in Jesus Christ. A novel question to ask a Baptist missionary.

The Protestant churches in Genoa have a difficult task in mission, perhaps due as much to their perception of themselves as other people's perception of them. Discussing some of Genoa's social problems with a Waldensian churchleader, he told me that unemployment was 10%, which is high for northern Italy. When I asked if any church was working with unemployed people he replied, "We are a small community; we are not the Roman Catholic church. What can we do?" A good question.

Mark Ord



Christopher & Sarah Mattock

Chris and sarah are members of Basingstoke Baptist Church. After leaving school Chris studied horticulture, worked as a VSO in Papua New Guinea and then in the family's rose growing firm near Oxford. He is also a qualified driving instructor. He trained for the Baptist ministry at Regent's Park College, Oxford from 1990 - 93.

Sarah, who comes from Cheam, trained for Occupational Therapy in Oxford. After getting married she worked in hospitals in Basingstoke, mostly in Community Health, and in 1991 spent three months as a volunteer at the Christian Medical Hospital, Vellore, India. They have a son, Simon, who is two years old.

They first went to Italy in 1993, beginning their work with language study.

Close-up on Saverio Guarna, BMS Missionary in Albania

Married in Rome in 1965 to Betsy, Saverio immediately enrolled at the Baptist Theological Seminary at Röschlikon to prepare for the ministry, whilst still carrying on his Law studies at the University of Rome. A couple of years later with a Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Theology and a Doctorate in Jurisprudence from Milan University under his belt, God led Saverio into a church planting ministry which resulted in a congregation of Italian immigrants being accepted into the Italian Baptist Union in 1968. After that, a pastorate in Switzerland, then back to Italy (now with three children) where Saverio pastored a congregation as well as being part-time Secretary of Evangelism within the Union. The work of Evangelism developed, and became a full-time post with Saverio director of it from 1981 -1990. Then in 1990 Saverio was elected President of the Italian Baptist Union. but in 1992 he declined a second term in order to go back to pastoral ministry

WALDENSIANS

The Waldensians were founded as a reform movement within the Roman Catholic church by Peter Waldo, a merchant of Lyons in the late 12th century. Waldo gave away his worldly goods and led a simple life of poverty and preaching. Others rallied to him and his lifestyle and at first this group was given papal approval. Their lives of poverty however served to emphasise the worldliness of many clergy. Both the Archbishop of Lyons and a new Pope prohibited their preaching and excommunicated them. In less than a decade the pendulum had swung from applauding their enthusiasm to branding them as heretics. The Waldensians fled from Lyons to two regions: Lombardy (north-central Italy) and Provence (south-east France), and with continued persecution by the end of the 13th century they had infiltrated practically all of Europe except for Britain.

They were now convinced that the Catholic church was indeed the 'Whore of Babylon' and rejected all paraphernalia associated with church as being totally unnecessary, eg. the buildings themselves, cemeteries, altars, holy water, liturgies, pilgrimages, Catholic feast days and indulgences. However, they did keep confession, absolution and the eucharist (which seems to have been held once a year.) There also seems to have been some kind of Waldensian baptism.

Although they spread throughout Europe they were stronger in some regions than others, and were particularly strong in central and eastern Europe and it was here that their work was later to influence the course of the Reformation, and in the 16th century Waldensian beliefs. •

PRAYER POINTS

Lord,

Many years ago when Paul wrote his letter to the Church in Rome, many people in Italy worshipped you, and they sent missionaries all over the world.

Nowadays Lord, in modern Italy, people think you're out-of-date; that religion is just a lot of beautiful churches and superstition. People are a lot more interested in the "3 Fs": football, family and food; faith has got left out.

Lord God make the Christians in Italy channels of your peace:

- Bring honesty where there is corruption;
- Bring faith in Jesus where there is trust in crying madonnas;
- Bring unity where there are two divided nations, North and South;
- Bring compassion for the poor and outsiders where they are often despised and ignored.

Lord breathe the life of your Spirit into the Church in Italy and to overflow into the people. In Jesus Name, Amen. (Thanks to Claire Ord)

Summer Year Teams

SOMETIMES A 28:19 SUMMER TEAM OR YEAR TEAM WILL BE SENT TO ITALY. HERE'S AN EXTRACT FROM SOMETHING A 28:19 ITALY SUMMER TEAM WROTE:

"The three of us formed a mission team with the MacFarlanes, plus three Italians, one Scotsman and someone who wasn't quite sure who he was! We spent four days in each of the four different Churches in the region. Our main aim was to try to revive the Churches' vision for evangelism.

"We broke the ice by going out onto the street singing choruses in English and Italian. So constant was our repetition of the songs we did know in Italian that, after three weeks, we were singing them in our sleep!

"We also performed sketches from

door-to-door visitation and leafleting. The leaflets invited people to a service which we held at the Churches every evening. At these services we gave testimony to our faith through word, song and drama. We tried to get the church members involved in our street work in order to give them experience in evangelism.

"In the Italian Baptist Church there is a real reluctance to evangelise. This is partly due to the problems of witnessing in a society where Catholicism dominates and Protestants are not recognised as Christians.

apologised to the Protestant denominations for not acknowledging them as Christians, we found that Catholics were very hostile and would not accept this. We also found that many Italians are so caught up in the tradition of the Catholic culture, that Christ and the Bible are not at the centre of their faith. In fact, 50% of Italians do not believe there is a God." Esther, Robert and Nicola

our limited repertoire of seven and did Although the Pope has publicly

Christians on the move

EARLY CHRISTIANS DISCOVERED THAT TRAVEL WAS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THE GOSPEL. DAVID POUNTAIN REVEALS SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE FIRST MISSIONARIES

> ravel broadens the mind, but does it do anything for Christian mission? At least one former BMS worker would have no problem in answering that question. Whenever he arrived at Gloucester Place in BMS's London days, he would regale staff with tales of his journey from Scotland. "I'm sorry I'm late," he would say. "There was this man on the train I was talking to about the Lord. We hadn't finished our conversation when we arrived in London, so we sat on our suitcases for a while, still talking about the Lord."

> He was following in the tradition of those early Christians who used their travels to witness to the gospel. It is no accident that the first churches were established in cities and towns strung along the highways of the Roman

Empire. People were on the move in the Roman world two thousand years ago. Backwards and forwards along the roads travelled soldiers, government officials, merchants, letter carriers, artisans and others. Many of these travellers were Christians and it was this, perhaps more than anything else, which contributed to the rapid expansion of the Christian faith in the first century.

The Roman legions preserved the peace and kept brigands and pirates at bay, making it relatively safe to travel by land or sea. The Romans were also great road builders and improvers, providing a network of routes throughout Europe, North Africa and the

Middle East. Christians took advantage of this and Paul, with his team, probably travelled something like 10,000 miles during his missionary career. That doesn't seem much by modern standards, but then he and his companions covered most of that on foot at a rate of 15 or 20 miles a

When you travel like that you meet people. You meet the soldiers, the merchants, the artisans, the letter carriers and the government officials. You meet fellow travellers, runaway slaves, workers in the fields and people sitting outside their homes under their fig trees. Who can imagine Paul not taking the opportunity to share his faith? That's something we've lost, journeying, as most of us do, insulated from the world in our metal boxes on wheels.

When Bishop Dinesh Gorai of the Church of North India was appointed to the Barrackpore diocese, he had no transport. He was forced to travel by bus, bicycle and on foot. This brought him close to the people of his diocese. "When you walk all afternoon with a man, you have time to get to know him, to talk about his problems and his hopes and to sense what makes him tick," he said.

A few years ago a group of BMS workers at Ntondo in Zaire discovered the truth of this. They were joining some American missionaries who were celebrating the tenth anniversary of their Habitat for Humanity mission. They decided to have a celebratory walk along the 40 kilometre track to Mbandaka. As they passed through different villages on their way people came out to speak with them.

"We thought you 'mindele' (white people) only travelled by Land Rover," they said. For the first time they were able to talk to these folk who normally only waved to them as they passed by.

Some of those early Christian travellers, like Paul, Barnabas, Timothy and Titus, were undertaking specific Christian mission. Others, like Lydia selling her purple cloth, were just going about their normal tasks. When Paul wrote to Christians in Rome, which he had never visited, he was able to greet people he had met and evangelised elsewhere (Romans 16), people like Prisca and Aquila and Epaenetus. It was natural for such Christians to

come together for worship and to encourage each other to share their faith. So the church grew because Christians were on the move.

Not until the 19th Century was the world opened up again enough to enable Christian missionaries to travel throughout the world. However, in the late 20th century ordinary people in Britain have also had the opportunity to travel. Year after year folk go on foreign holidays. Young people are spending a large part of their money on travel and have become the new back-packing globe-trotters. Others are travelling on business. Many of these people are Christians. How are they using these new travel opportunities? Are they seen as mission opportunities? Christians whose business or professions takes them

The Roman legions preserved the peace and kept brigands and pirates at bay, making it relatively safe to travel by land or sea.



overseas, even for short periods, often find themselves in situations and countries which are closed to traditional mission work. Ought we not to be preparing them to live and work effectively as Christians in these different cultures?

They may not see themselves as able to preach for conversion, but all Christians should, in some measure, be witnessing to their own conversion by their words, their conduct and their life-style. Firms which send employees to work overseas take considerable time and effort to prepare them to be effective ambassadors for their companies. Sadly most churches do little than promise to pray.

What about Christian tourists and holiday-makers? Are holidays an excuse for taking time off from our Christian responsibilities or should we see them as a means of meeting new people, making new friends and sharing our faith? The opportunity to visit other countries is also an occasion to meet local Christians and to offer encouragement. In the early church, the movement of Christians from one place to another meant that there was a constant flow of news and ideas. So Paul could respond

quickly to news from Jerusalem and arrange for offerings to be taken up.

In some parts of the world, small groups of isolated Christians, almost overwhelmed by other religions, welcome with open arms Christian visitors from elsewhere. It reminds them that they are part of a global church and this can make all the difference.

However, news and ideas can flow back into the life of local churches in the UK too, as long as churches are ready to receive them. Just as Christians on the move to other countries should be properly prepared for the adventure of sharing their faith, so they should be effectively debriefed when they return. The lessons that individual travellers have learned on their journeys are important for the life and work of the church back home.

Travel broadens the mind, it can also widen our

Christian horizons opening up new areas of Christian service.



David Pountain is Missionary Herald Consulting Editor and minister at Florence Road Baptist Church, Brighton





Who's sending who to where? **Countries where BMS has an involvement**

			Statistical comparison Missionaries per 1 million		
	ProtestantMissionaries FROM	Foreign Protestants TO	non christian	non protestant	
Albania	n/a				
Angola	9	115	37	14	
Bangladesh	132	316	3	3	
Belgium	65	572	550	58	
Brazil	2768	3397	311	32	
Bulgaria	0	77	28	9	
CAR	14	208	131	99	
China	n/a				
Croatia	0	2	4	0	
El Salvador	130	113	409	28	
France	456	1348	85	25	
India	11284	775	7	7	
Indonesia	1518	1599	13	12	
Italy	198	462	41	8	
Jamaica	45	209	168	134	
Nepal	155	584	31	31	
Portugal	174	333	382	33	
South Africa	1866	1294	161	72	
Sri Lanka	159	117	8	7	
Thailand	117	1293	24	23	
Trinidad	32	94	165	98	
Zaire	2086	1470	551	66	
Zimbabwe	240	630	145	98	
Australia	3598	743	149	83	
Canada	5336	408	53	23	
Korea (S)	3957	409	14	13	
New Zealand	1715	218	224	136	
UK	7012	1021	61	44	
USA	59074	2484	52	26	

Taken from Operation World

Data is given only where it is expedient to do so. Missionaries include short term workers of over one year's service and furloughing missionaries assigned to these countries.

The statistical comparison is a statistical reconstruction rather than the actual number of missionaries. The lower the figure the greater need for missionaries.

For discussion:

- 1 Which figures stand out to you from this table, and why? (For example, they could be the high figures, countries sending or receiving a lot of missionaries, or at the other end of the scale, the low figures, countries in need of missionaries.)
- 2 Are the statistics from some countries a surprise to you?
- 3 BMS has a policy of working in partnership with other mission agencies; some will be predominantly involved in evangelism, others in other kinds of Christian service eg

social work, helping with development. Do you think this is a good thing? Are there other ways BMS could work? (Wht not write and tell us about your ideas. Address your letters to the Editor, Richard Wells.)

4 Following on from Q.3, missionary service nowadays is often seeking to train national Christians to minister to their own culture, in ways that are appropriate, so that the Western missionary becomes redundant in that situation.

Operation World comments in its section on Africa that "Most Africans think missionary work to be the job of Europeans."

What are your comments on this? Is it a situation to be welcomed or resisted?

5 Mission is more than missionaries. What other things must be recognised and included in the support of world mission?



Total Missionary Serving Members 1980 - 1995

	1980	1986	1991	1995	
Missionary sending churches	560	469	491	508	
Roman Catholic Societies	1799	1588	1625	1496	
Interdenominational Societies	3058	3218	3346	4160	
Other Denominational Societies	1080	1276	1215	1261	
Anglican Societies	1655	1384	1381	1482	
Total	8252	7935	8058	8907	

Taken from Quadrant Information produced by Christian Research Association, October 1995

TOP TEN MISSIONARY SENDING COUNTRIES

This table shows the top ten nations sending the highest ratio of Protestant missionaries in relation to their population eg for every 2,550 people in Norway one Protestant missionary has gone overseas.

1	950	Faroe Islands
2	1,540	American Samoa
3	1,790	Northern Marianas
4	1,990	New Zealand
5	2,010	Tonga

6 2,080 Solomon Islands 7 2,300 Western Samoa 8 2,490 Fiji 9

2,550 Norway 10 3,780 Finland Source: Operation World

POINTS FOR PRAISE

AFRICA The vision for the number of missions in Africa has grown, and the number of African missionaries and agencies is steadily increasing. Note especially a number of Nigerian missions, many reaching out to Muslims and unreached peoples.

ASIA as a continent has seen spectacular church growth since 1980 eg in countries like Korea and Indonesia. In

Yeshua Ben David -Why do the Jewish People reject Jesus as their Messiah, by Walter Riggans MARC price £10.99

Jewish theologians insist that Jesus could not have been the Messiah of Israel. But if Jesus isn't Israel's biblically promised Messiah, how could he be anyone else's Messiah? Walter Riggans's book is, perhaps, more broadly about Jewish people and covers the theological, historical and psychological reasons for their rejection of Jesus as Messiah. It is firmly intended for the layman and is easy to read, but is, nevertheless, a very thorough book handling even technical issues in a fashion

suitable for any serious Christian

The author addresses the cross-cultural complications of evangelistic ministry among Jews and the Messianic passages from Old Testament scripture.

He covers the textual reasons and the interpretive arguments for Christianity's differences with Jewish theologicans. He details the immense sensitivity which Jews have concerning Christian evangelism and he continually extends the careful and thoughtful evangelism. Walter Riggins is a Church of Scotland minister and General Secretary for the Church's Ministry among the Jews.

Kelly Hendrick

1980 there were five Asian countries with no known believers; today there are three (Cambodia, North Korea and Maldives). Countries with restrictions have eased them and more Christian ministries are possible eg in Nepal, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. Asia's missions have increased in every way possible - in size, in maturity, in momentum Chinese, Korean, and Filipino missionaries are becoming an increasing component in the missionary force in many lands.

EUROPE Give thanks that freedom of religion is now a reality for all of Europe. Pray that it may continue! SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICA Praise God for the explosive Christian growth that has been seen this century. Brazil has twice as many evangelicals as there are in all of Europe.

AND PRAYER

AFRICA There is a huge need for leadership training and there is a bottleneck because of lack of funds for training and supporting full time workers. Pray for leadership training at all levels, and for material to be biblical yet Africa orientated.

ASIA. In some parts of Asia the church has declined as a percentage of the population eg Sri Lanka, North India, Hong Kong. Pray that this might be reversed. In Asia there are blocs of Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists who are virtually untouched by any Christian contact. Pray that more of these countries may open up and that those who hear, may believe.

EUROPE The church in Europe generally has lost the younger generation. Young people with their own youth culture can be seen as a sub-culture which needs missionaries specially attuned to hearing what young people are saying. Pray for those involved with outreach and discipling ministries among young people. SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICA Pray for the training of pastors - mainly that it may happen! Some reckon there are 175,000 evangelical pastors with no formal training.

Touching the Soul of Islam, by Bill Musk MARC price £8.99

As Christians with distinctly Western minds, we have very little grasp of Middle Eastern culture.

In his most recent book, Bill Musk explores Muslim life, thought and literature to bring to our Western minds an understanding and appreciation of the Middle Eastern world.

He demonstrates that Middle Eastern culture is very similar to the culture of the Bible and, in doing so, brings light to our understanding of the present day Middle East,

as well as to Scripture.

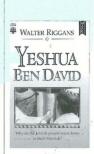
How fascinating to see Scripture through the eyes of Middle Eastern culture instead of the culture of the modern West.

The author's thoughts, however, are not organised in a very systematic way and as a result the book does not enjoy an easy flow; it's almost like walking through a dark forest looking at the vegetation with a torch. After reading the book, though, the ramble is something one begins to appreciate.

Touching the Soul of Islam is a strong effort to do just that.

Kelly Hendrick









GLOBAL

CHALLENGE

They came from all parts of the UK. They have gone into all the world. Their challenge is to make Jesus known. The first report from the 1996 BMS Action Teams comes from Richard Wells

or the city of Birmingham it was another Saturday. The continuous stream of morning traffic taking a legion of shoppers into the city centre under a grey overcast sky made the same interminable buzz as the previous Saturday.

The same passengers paid their customary homage to the public transport system by catching the same buses.

The same children, pockets fiscally recharged, made their habitual pilgrimages to the same sweet shops.

But for 22 young people this particular Saturday -

September 9, 1995 heralded the beginning of the most challenging year of their lives; the threshold of an experience that would change their outlook on the world forever.

These were the successful applicants for the BMS 28:19 Action Team 1996 expeditions.

Whatever diverse academic levels they had recently celebrated, these young people were now to compete on equal terms; waiting in the reception area of St Andrew's Hall missionary college, at Selly Oak, they anticipated the two-week intensive practical training course ahead with a mixture of apprehension,

excitement and inadequacy.

The course was to be no respecter of intellect or muscle; it would expose them to tough challenges in their personal, spiritual and practical lives in preparation for the rigours ahead.

The challenge for course leader Phil Marsden - BMS Youth and Children's Coordinator - was to weld this mismatched mixture, as compatible as a bagful of ferrets and hedgehogs, into strong teams, prepared physically and spiritually for front line mission tasks like street evangelism, teaching and care work.

This was the first time the 22 had met as a group. They had come to Birmingham from places as far flung as Stirling in Scotland, Teignmouth in Devon, Swansea in Wales and the London suburb of Tooting. At the other end lay the prospect of six months in a foreign land, coping with an alien culture without familiar shoulders to lean on.

"It was essential that we equipped them in every way for the job," says Phil. "They needed to know the value of working and living as teams. They needed the proper practical skills to survive in totally different circumstances, and they certainly needed devotional lives to match."

And so began the practical training in evangelism, street work, communication, drama, counselling and spiritual warfare with in-house lecturers and guest speakers.

Study sessions on servanthood, prayer and fasting, living a Spirit-filled life, integrity and holiness, aimed to underpin their Christian faith and reaffirm their beliefs, and it was here that foundations began to rock, inadequacies and lack of confidence started to emerge.

"Of course we had emotions and tears," says Phil. "These were young people away from home, facing a mammoth challenge. They were bound to wobble."

One by one doubts and fears were addressed by Phil and his team:

"I think I've made a big mistake."

"I'm not good enough look at the others, they're so much stronger than me."

"Will my family still be there when I get back?"

"Will I be able to stand through all this?"

For the first strenuous few days, the 22 different personalities fought an uphill struggle. Then came the release and, as though a mist had lifted, team spirit

emerged, attitudes changed, empathy strengthened.

"We were seeing individual lives changing before our eyes, young people growing closer to God," says Phil. "Young people were being filled with the Holy Spirit for the first time. There was confidence. boldness and courage in God."

Teams began to pray together daily, share more openly with one another, counsel each other. The level of encouragement rose as each realised that they shared similar apprehensions and feelings of inadequacy.

Today, as the five teams look out at the sharp end of mission work in France, Albania, Trinidad, India and Sri Lanka, they will be drawing deeply on the practical and spiritual skills and knowledge built up during those two intensive weeks, for trouble was certain to strike.

And strike it did - visa problems in Trinidad, the intense irritation of mosquito bites, the shock of living in extremes of temperature, language barriers, meeting people whose needs and aspirations are totally different to those back home. Add to this homesickness, and it is not long before the challenge of simply existing stretches tolerance to breaking point.

But, as teams have discovered, perseverance triumphs — like the breakthrough 19-year-old Nigel Cope, from Moortown Baptist Church, Leeds,

experienced as one of the India and Sri Lanka team.

"It took a few days to get over the shock of the city of Calcutta," he says. "Everything just overwhelmed me, the poverty, the smell and the squalor, and the fact that I was spending three months in it.

"But Wednesday afternoon saw a change. For some reason I just took a step back and went out in it. It was amazing; all my other thoughts disappeared. I looked for the first time beyond the city and saw the people. They are amazing."

Persistent Nigel had got to grips with the reason for his Action Team's assignment. His heart had been touched. compassion began to rise and he realised the Holy Spirit's tutelage had added a new layer in the foundations begun at Selly

28:

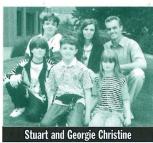
He and his fellow team members were moving forward in their mission to communicate the gospel effectively, rising to the challenge to show it in their lives.

The team were becoming increasingly aware that their strongest testimony during the coming months would be their love for each other.

Richard Wells is the BMS Publicity Manager

prayerfocus

A regular update from our missionaries around the world compiled by **Sam Gibson**

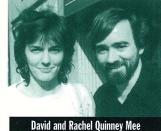


A 'Pioneer Package' has been produced to support local churches prepared to consider mission work in the favelas around São Paulo an area often ignored due to fear, prejudice and uncertainty about how to tackle such varied and profound material and spiritual need. It is a combination of evangelistic and social programmes including a pre-school programme and ministerial student involvement. A health support scheme is being implemented for the pre-school children with the aim to appoint a community health worker who will get to know the children in the schools and give the families the health care, guidance and support that they need at home to create a healthy environment for the children to grow and develop. At the moment, these five year olds already suffer poor health and are not well enough to make the most of the chance to learn

and grow out of the poverty cycle they are trapped in. The scheme is also looking to equip a vehicle as a mobile dental and health care clinic from which a nurse will operate, reaching children and their families in up to ten favelas.

Please pray:

- for the appointment of a health care worker
- for the right vehicle to become available for the mobile dental and health care clinic
- for the whole scheme to come to fruition
- · for local churches to catch the vision and become involved in mission work in the favelas.



Parliament has recently approved a new minimum salary level. To arrive at this figure, the National Council for Minimum Salary took account of the cost of basic foods, housing, clothing and miscellaneous items (health care and education) to come

up with a basic cost of living for an average family of something over 4,000 colones a month (£300). They then set the minimum salary at just over 1,000 colones per month for the industrial sector and about 600 colones for different agricultural sectors. Their 'average family' therefore needs about four urban minimum wage earners or seven rural earners to cross the poverty line. An increasing number of 16 and 17 year old girls are seeking

jobs in sweatshops where they work 12 hours per day. Six hours is the legal maximum and they receive less than the minimum wage with no overtime pay.

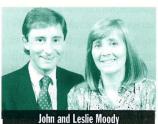


Roger and Nikki Pearce

Roger and Nikki Pearce met at Heaton Baptist Church, Newcastle-upon-Tyne where they are members - they were married in 1991 and are expecting their first child in September. Before joining BMS Roger was head of Language at a secondary school in Morpeth, Northumberland. He teaches French and German. Nikki is a trained general nurse and midwife. Roger and Nikki studied at St Andrews in Selly Oak before flying out to Albania this month. Roger begins work as an educational advisor and Nikki will be involved in community health care and midwifery. Roger likes curry and supports Manchester City - how difficult it will be to find in Albania is anyone's guess! Nikki enjoys sewing and embroidery.

Please pray:

- for guidance on how to pray for heads of state and those in high places, so that all in El Salvador might live in peace and dignity
- · for the Quinney Mee's first baby which is due on 6 January, Rachel wants to have a home birth



EI SALVADOR

John and Lesley Moody from Orpington have two grown up daughters. Before joining the BMS, John worked for a Lloyds insurance syndicate for 27 years and Leslie worked for a housing association. They have completed their biblical and mission studies at All Nations Christian College and then finished off their training at St Andrews, Selly Oak. They flew out this month to Brazil with a view to becoming hostel parents in São Paulo. Both John and Lesley are keen on sport and are interested in golf, swimming, badminton and walking.



A book about Modern

Science and the Christian Faith, written in Portuguese and arising from Peter's work over five years with students of the Federal University, has finally been accepted for publication by the ABU Editoria in Brazil. Peter says, "Once word got around that I had a degree in physics as well as being a theologian lecturing at the Baptist College, I found that university students were searching me out with their intellectual problems." Peter found that the intellectual standard of these young people was usually way below that which they had to cope with when they got to university. They soon discovered that their childhood ideas of a six thousand year old universe and a six day creation neither squared with what they were learning at the Faculty nor with their own changing view of the world.

After a few years of working with the evangelical students at the Federal University, Peter was persuaded to give a series of evangelistic lunch-time talks on science and the Christian faith in 1990 and again in 1991. Peter says, "They were a wonderful

experience, especially as some students and a lecturer came to faith in Christ." After that, invitations to speak in other parts of Brazil came in and eventually the chief editor of the ABU suggested that Peter should write a book. This he did and the book was finished in 1994.

The book, which as yet remains untitled, is an attempt to present Science and Religion as complementary rather than contradictory - where they overlap, Peter tries to harmonize them. It has a dual purpose of firstly giving Christian students a view of the world and God's involvement in it which enables them to deal with the attacks on their faith common in Brazilian universities. Secondly, Peter has made the book evangelistic so that it can be given as a present to interested friends. Peter says, "Having seen the relief on Christian students' faces when they discover that they can believe in the Bible and dedicate themselves fully to their studies, I am desperately anxious to put the book into the hands of students all over Brazil."

Peter is also pleased to see the look on the faces of non-Christians when they realise their arguments against the Christian faith are not as solid as they had imagined!

Peter believes this book has a wide ministry and so is keen to have it in print as soon as possible. In November, the ABU agreed to publish the book although at the time they did not have sufficient funds. They applied to the BMS for a grant from the literature fund which was agreed very quickly and so it finally appears to be 'all systems go' for this important work.'

Please pray:

- thank God for the story so far and pray that there will be no further hindrances to this book being published
- · for its witness to Christians and non-Christians alike
- · for Peter and Sue thanks for their perseverance in pushing this book towards publication and for Peter's ministry amongst the students of Brazil
- · that Peter and Sue be greatly blessed as they continue in their work as hostel parents

Wayne and Wendy Hadley

Wayne and Wendy Hadley are members of Sutton Coldfield Baptist Church. After working for Lucas in Training Administration, Wayne studied for three years at Moorlands College (Theology and Missiology). Before their children Ben and Charlotte came along, Wendy was involved in secretarial work as well as church youth work and other organisations. Wayne and Wendy went to Massy, France for language training this month and hope to work in France when this is completed. They both enjoy walking and swimming and Wayne likes to play sports such as rugby, badminton and football. Wendy is looking forward to being able to take the children camping and boating.





nepal



NEPAI

The Nepali government has been undergoing a period of turmoil over the past few months. A General Election was called by the communist PM who requested that the King have parliament dissolved. This was done but then overturned as it was ruled to be unconstitutional. The PM resigned and two days later a Congress party leader replaced him heading up a three party coalition government. The handover of power has been generally peaceful despite a few tense days of strikes and the new PM, Mr Deuba, has promised justice and water for the poor. It remains to be seen how this is to be implemented.

Just a few days before the change of government, the United Mission to Nepal's five year general agreement to operate in the country was approved. A few days later and a different set of government ministers would have been involved causing delays and reviews. Work now begins on getting four further departmental agreements approved which will enable UMN to continue to work in the fields of Health, Education,

Rural Development and Engineering and Industrial Development.

Please pray:

- · for peace to continue as regards to the change of government
- · that there be no reduction in the freedom of religion experienced by the Nepali church under the new government
- that the PM's promises to the poor will come to fruition
- · for David, Lyndsay and Kirsty in general and for Catherine as she takes on extra work with her teaching English as a foreign language and becomes involved in prison visiting



Opposition to the growth of the Church in Nepal is becoming more apparent. 11 Christians are still in prison after being charged with 'converting' others to Christianity in September 1994. There is no case against them as the said converts are still Hindus and deny the charges. The Christians remain in prison awaiting a hearing however. Much money would be needed to have them

released on bail and a large amount has already been spent on lawyers and help for the families of the prisoners.

There have also been calls from the World Hindu Federation for an end to Christian missionary activity in Nepal.

Please pray:

- that justice may be done and these brothers and sisters released soon
- · that they may continue to experience the presence of God
- · for the continued expansion of God's church in Nepal in the face of opposition
- · for the family as they face further separation - Ruth is already in England and hopes to teach when her course is completed, Sarah finishes school in the summer and hopes to go to art college in England which will leave only Susanna in Nepal without her sisters



BANGLADESH

Violence has erupted onto the streets of Bangladesh due to political upheaval. The opposition parties are campaigning to have the government

ousted which has led to a series of general strikes of increasing length and effect on the people - if the trend continues, these strikes will cause untold suffering to thousands of daily workers and will ruin businesses. As well as the general strikes there are processions and demonstrations which erupt into violence. There have even been some deaths and the sound of gun-fire is heard frequently day and night.

Please pray:

- · for an immediate end to violence and for a resolution of the political turmoil
- · the continued safety of Valerie and other missionaries in countries where violence reigns
- · for the break through of the Gospel - many are coming to Christ in Bangladesh but many more have still not heard



NEPAL

The Clewetts have felt the call to leave Nepal where they were involved in public health and education work in Kathmandu, and settle back down in London. They have returned to their house in Plaistow and are worshipping and finding new roles at their home

church, Memorial Baptist. They have now officially resigned from the BMS although they are keeping in touch with many friends in Nepal. Both Jerry and Ruth have found jobs after encountering the frustrations of the employment market in this country. Ruth as a primary school teacher in East London and Jerry with the third world charity PLAN International, liaising with the overseas development administration of the government and other official funding bodies, trying to get funding for projects. The children have all settled into their respective schools quite well considering the upheaval of a different society and education system. Simon, at eleven, began secondary school in September and Naomi and Paul are both attending a local primary school. The children have joined sports clubs and the boys are now involved in Boys Brigade.

Please pray:

- for the Clewett family as they continue to re-adjust to
- life in this country, that the education of the children will not be adversely affected by these changes
- · that they will quickly discover God's continuing plan for their lives in Britain.



Paul and Hilary Drinkwater are members of Kendal Road Baptist Church, Gloucester and have also been actively involved in a church plant - Kingholm Christian Fellowship. Paul is a teacher and has taught in colleges of further

education and higher education, in Electronic Engineering and Teacher Training. Hilary is a registered nurse and district nursing sister. Paul and Hilary flew out to Nepal this month where Paul is to teach electronics at Kathmandu University and Hilary is hoping to get involved in medical work. Paul and Hilary have three children and two grandchildren.



Simon Collins

Simon Collins is a doctor who grew up in Sussex and did his medical training at Liverpool. He is now a GP at Bromsgrove where he is a member of New Road Baptist Church. Simon did mission studies at St Andrews College in Selly Oak, Birmingham and then a course in tropical diseases. Simon has just begun six months of language training in Portugal before he goes out to Angola. In Angola Simon will be responsible for setting up a community health project in a region of 150,000 people - a difficult task due to the lack of infrastructure caused by the continuing civil war. Simon enjoys the cinema, sport, skiing and food.

Jill and Philip Igoe

Jill and Philip Igoe were married in 1991. Philip, who trained at Spurgeon's College, has been minister of South Ossett Baptist Church since 1989 and prior to their marriage, Jill was involved in childrens and youth work. She then went on to complete a BEd teacher training course. Jill and Philip have been accepted by BMS to work in Zimbabwe and are studying at St Andrews in Selly Oak prior to going out early in 1996. They both enjoy walking, gardening and reading and Philip enjoys football whilst Jill is more interested in swimming.

JANUARY 1996

Arrivals: None

Departures:

Paul and Hilary Drinkwater to Nepal John and Leslie Moody to Brazil Wayne and Wendy Hadley to France Roger and Nicola Pearce to Albania Simon Collins to Portugal Jacqui Wells to Thailand Katie Norris to Nepal Lee and Evenlyn Messeder to Brazil Mary Parsons to Brazil

Overseas Visits:

Carolyn Green to India and Thailand Phil Marsden to Amsterdam Derek Rumbol to Kenya, Zimbabwe and Angola

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

invites applications for the following post THE BARNABAS PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR (50% full time)

Within the Department for Missionaries the person appointed will be responsible for coordinating the Barnabas Programme, which will incorporate the selection, training and placement of volunteers both as individuals and in teams for short term service overseas. He/she will also provide their own administrative/secretarial support and computer skills are essential. This post is initially subject to a three year fixed term contract and subject to

Good holiday entitlement; occupational pension scheme and free meals in the staff restaurant.

The BMS is actively involved in mission in over 30 countries and its work is supported by churches throughout England, Scotland and Wales from whom we look for continued

Registered Charity number 233782.

Further information, application forms and job descriptions are available from: Mr M J Quantick, Administration Manager, Baptist Missionary Society, PO Box 49, Baptist House, 129 Broadway, DIDCOT 0X11 8XA, Telephone: 01235 512077, ext 240. Closing date for applications is: 12 January 1996.





Naked talent



here is nothing quite like sitting around an open fire on a cold winter's evening, a good meal inside you and congenial company. Stories were being told and events of the past relived in the mind at

least as the evening wore on.

More logs were added to the fire and there was music playing softly in the background. It was a clear, crisp night and the stars were out but no moon. Why mention the sky. Well because we could see it of course. Did I forget to mention we were not in some cosy sitting room with the curtains drawn and lights on but outside sitting around a fire in a courtyard in front of several bamboo and thatched houses in the north of Bangladesh with someone playing a bamboo flute on a nearby verandah.

Eventually someone suggested bed and most of us settled for the night. Most because the men of the village took turns at staying awake on dark nights to keep guard

where is my ...

over their cattle against raids across the border from India.

I was with the Association Secretary on a tour of churches holding meetings and meeting local pastors as we went. We had a district pastor with us who was visiting some folk in order to collect the payment for a pair of water buffalo he had sold to them. The day had been successful with a good turn out at the evening prayer meeting and the pastor had the money for buffalo in his shoulder bag.

The three of us continued talking as we tried to get comfortable on the fresh straw which had been put on the hard mud floor to act as some sort of mattress for us. I dozed off and I guess the others did too until rudely awoken by a prodding in the ribs and a very loud stage whisper in the ear telling me to get up quickly and run as the dakoits (bandits) were coming to the village. Never

> needing to be told twice about such fundamental acts of self-preservation, I got out of my sleeping bag as quickly as I could and ran following the others into the undergrowth.

> There was a commotion all around and eventually we heard that the robbers had been

driven off. Not before time as it was very cold, not to mention distinctly uncomfortable, in the bushes!

We then had a problem how to return discreetly to the now dimly lit houses as one of my colleagues was stark naked! He had been in such a rush to get out of the

blankets and away that he had grabbed his bag with the money in it but forgotten his lungi (sleeping garment).

Well we got him back, rekindled the fire, no more sleep that night but more tales of daring raids and even more

heroics in the defence of property and possession. I have often wondered though, had it been me, which I would have grabbed.

John Passmore, the BMS Europe Representative was a missionary in Bangladesh for seven yeras

John Passmore takes a sideways view



A CHRIST-GIVEN PURPOSE

What are we here for? What does being a Christian, being the church of Jesus Christ mean? After the crucifixion, Jesus' traumatized disciples must have asked what's it all about? What did he call us together for? What should we be doing now? Jesus gives four guiding

Clothed with power from on high (49): We cannot witness or serve in our own strength. Spiritual gifts are given by God for his mission and ministry and we need to be open to whatever he wishes to give to

Renewal is about new lives. It is the expectancy that God will act that I have experienced in Brazil; the sense of fellowship, sacrifice and suffering for others which I have observed in Central America.

> You are witnesses of these things (48): We have read and heard some dynamic Christian speakers who excite and challenge, but these are not our authority. We must only proclaim those truths which we are authorised to believe by those who can say: "I saw, I heard, I touched."

> Preached to all nations (47): Mission is every part of our daily life - no dualism of Sunday and the rest. Not the absurdity of supporting overseas mission, while neglecting personal witness to our neighbours who know little of God's purpose for their lives.

The Good News is God's rescue from this moneymad, sex-mad, power-mad, success-driven life that so many are trying to live, only to drown in stress and disappointment.

But there will be no mission without passion - if you don't believe it don't preach it, I tell my students.

Understand the Scriptures (44-46): Do we believe that the Bible is God's word for our lives and the life of the church?

Yes! Good evangelicals will be sure to give the correct answer. But it is not enough to believe that the Bible is the word of God - we must live according to its truth. The cross must be at the centre of our faith; the way to resurrection life in the power of the Spirit is through the cross.

The way ahead is the only way we've ever had: to go and make disciples in the power of the Spirit.

After ten years as minister of Highfield Baptist Church, Northamptonshire, John Weaver is now Tutor in Pastoral Theology at Regent's Park College, Oxford. John has benefited from two periods of sabbatical study leave with the BMS: Brazil (1989) and Nicaragua and El Salvador (1995).

Helping Where it Matters

BMS Relief Fund



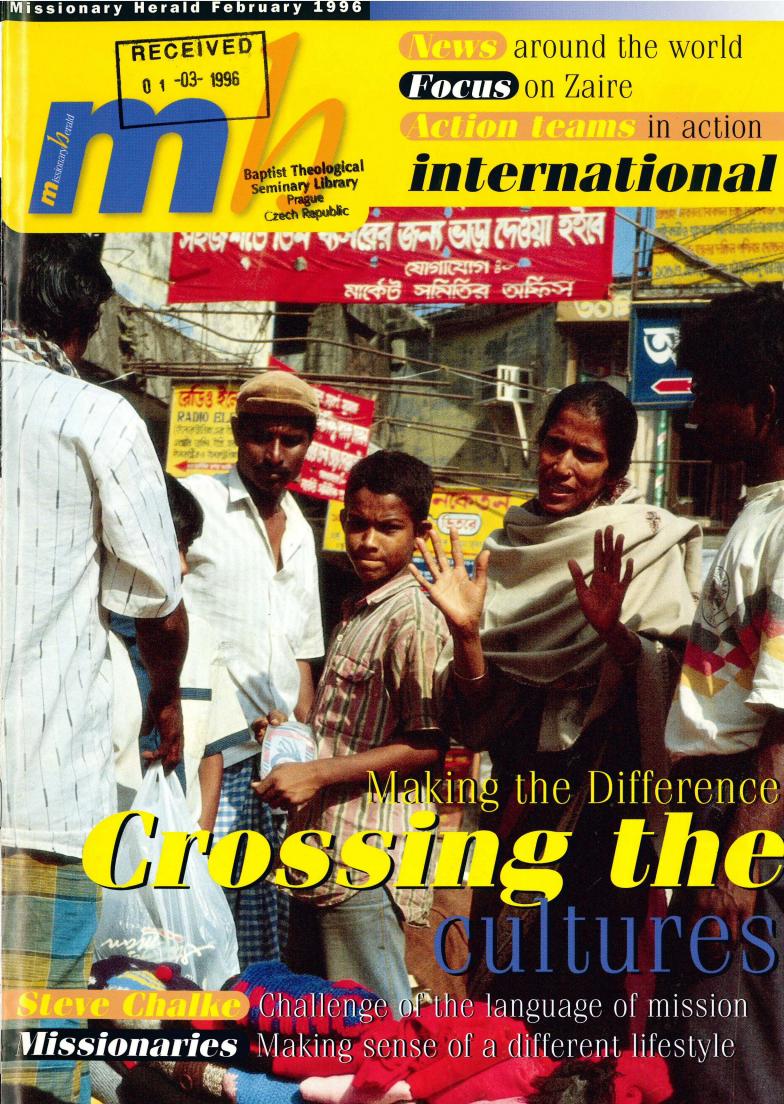
Meeting needs that don't always hit the headlines

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Natural disasters, civil wars, refugee crises... they're images we see regularly on TV and in the newspapers. But what about those that don't always hit the headlines? Like making life more bearable for children who survived the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, or supplying medicines to fight measles in Zaire. The BMS Relief Fund is able to respond with compassion and speed to those hit by circumstances beyond their control. What's more, we know we have control over where the money goes and that every pound donated will go to meet those needs, because nothing is deducted by BMS from gifts for administration.

Please will you help us to help where it matters?

BMS Relief Fund





V i n d o w World the







You get out of bed, grab your towel, step into your shower and – whoosh – you've got hot water courtesy of an

immersion heater which probably rumbled into life in the small hours thanks to a little electronic box of tricks.

Breakfast? No problem. Shake a box of corn flakes into a bowl and add milk.

Got to get somewhere fast? Answer – InterCity will get you there, or you can jump into the car.

That's how we do it in Britain. And very convenient it is! But it doesn't happen everywhere, so we commissioned four contributors to open the door on to other ways of life to show what cultural gulfs BMS missionaries sometimes cross to share the gospel of Jesus Christ and to encourage national Christians in the work of mission. It's not designed to send you on a Western materialism guilt trip – but we hope it will help you to pray with understanding for those who are at the sharp end.

Richard Wells

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Feature Section

CROSSING CULTURES

Mh Columnist

DOES IT MAKE SENSE?

News Section

(FOREIGN AND HOME NEWS)

Take a look at the world from a global perspective 11

Centre Spread

THE LADY RETURNS TO ANGOLA

Margaret Grenfell goes back for her 90th birthday..... 18

Country Focus

Mh LOOKS AT ZAIRE

Jan Kendall gives a overview of the nation 20

Mission File

(IDEAS AND OPINIONS)

Facts, figures and background resource material...... 24

Personal prayer

WHO AND WHAT TO PRAY FOR

John Passmore

GREEN WELLIES

John Passmore is lost for words...... 34

Waves

(AN INDEPENDENT VIEW)

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

QUESTIONS OF FINANCE

How are we all paying for world mission?

COUNTRY FOCUS

Brazil PLUS supporting features

FRONT COVER: Different culture – shopping at an Asian market clothes stall is a far cry from Marks and Spencer

THERE'S A WELCOME IN THE HILLSIDE . . . BUT IT'S A TWO-DAY WALK AWAY, AS MARK AND **MARIAN RUDALL EXPLAIN**

early vertical zig-zag paths are never inviting, especially to tired walkers in blazing sunshine. But there, just visible at the top were three tiny figures and through my binoculars I saw them shielding their eyes from the sun, squinting down at us and waving.

This view of the welcome party -amother and two children at the top of the hill - had the same kind of effect as a rope being let down as we trudged wearily upwards to greet them. Yet despite the encouragement it was nearly an hour after our first sighting that we finally clambered up to join my sister-in-law and two young nephews.

Alison Rudall, married to my brother Chris, has two young sons of seven and four. She and her husband are BMS missionaries and they live in Takum, a Nepali village 30 miles – two days' walk - from the nearest road.

When she came to meet us Alison had not left the confines of the village for some three months and during that time had carried on a daily routine of formal home schooling for seven-yearold, Alex, and informal teaching of David, who is four.

Home for the family is a rented stone-and-mud house of classic rural Nepali style. While it is undeniably picturesque with its wall of snowcovered Himalayas looming in the

Out in the sticks background, life inside is a far cry from Chris and Alison's pleasant semi in Macclesfield. The Takum house has a slate roof but no ceilings so that when the

occasional rat runs along the roofbeams he's easy to see if not so easy to catch. The roof leaks spectacularly in monsoon rain because hundreds of years of Nepali roof design never quite cracked the problem of what to do at the apex of pitched roofs.

Floors downstairs are of earth, newly mudded each morning by the family's Nepali home help, their Didi. The word means "elder sister", but Didi is an essential daily help, baking bread, making dal baht and taking the washing out to be scrubbed on the concrete at the nearby tap-stand.

The long-drop toilet – just a hole in a concrete slab – in a tiny outhouse peopled by curiously flat but large spiders, provides its own special challenge several times each day. The same is true of the wood-fired stove and two primitive Chinese-made paraffin stoves on which all cooking and water heating is done.

The house became space-age in the eyes of neighbours when a shallow concrete sink was installed, standing on two massive pillars with a gap between. The householders point out that the design is exactly the same as the one in Fred Flintstone's home in Bedrock, except unlike him, they don't have a pocket-sized dinosaur sitting underneath to act as a pedal-bin.

There is a small outhouse with a rain-water tap fitted up by Chris. This wash-house, though, is not conducive to washing too regularly although

occasional once-overs with the sort of solar showerbag used by caravanners is a possibility when the sun is out. The sun also powers a solar-panel which charges a truck-battery and provides, again, caravan-style lighting around the house.

The milkman comes each day in the form of a small Nepali boy with a grubby plastic jug. Most of the foreign bodies in it are caught when the milk is filtered twice and boiled. This buffalo milk is mixed with dried milk to make supplies of yoghurt using cultures sent from Britain.

Supplies brought by visitors are very important. Savoury sauce mixes add interest to the ever-present rice. A large selection of Instant Whips and similar products are essential to mix with the buffalo milk. Best of all though, for every missionary that I have ever met, a supply of Cadbury's Dairy Milk is a treasure beyond rubies. Eyes light up when the chocolate appears because nothing tastes so much of home.

Yes, the Takum house may be very attractive in a photograph. Indeed, having travelled for five days to spend a weekend there, followed by a further five days to get home again, its almost total isolation up there in the Himalayan Middle Hills lent it a romance I will never forget.

While there I recorded the jackals

coming up the hill and taunting the local dogs. I resisted the temptation to record the sound of Takum waking up - best symbolised by the gutwrenching sound of sustained hawking and spitting as the people started their daily routines.

I wanted to identify with Chris and Alison, for my wife, Marian, and I are both involved in world mission in different ways ourselves. She is a Senior Accounts Clerk at BMS in Didcot while I serve Tear Fund as Regional Co-ordinator for Central Southern England. Our private visit to Nepal in November 1995 brought

these roles together since Chris and Alison are BMS missionaries seconded to the International Nepal Fellowship to work on INF's "West Myagdi Community Health Programme" – which happens to be funded partly by Tear Fund alongside contributions from Tear Fund Australia and Bread for the World.

With all these connections we ought to feel very involved in their scene: but we live in comfortable surroundings in Britain. In Takum we saw one of the truly isolated frontiers of 20th Century Christian mission where the work is uphill in every respect. We shared communion together and my brother said it all as he chewed on the piece of Didi's solid-but-wholesome bread I had broken off for him: "this could take some time!"

To choose to live there, surrounded by a people whose culture, dark religious traditions and language are all so alien demands that people like my brother and his wife are either mad or trusting fully in the Grace of God. Only he could ask them to go there – or perhaps more accurately, only he can keep them there.

It's also only in His strength that they, like so many other equally isolated Christian mission and development workers, can say "We've never felt so sure that we're in the right place at this moment".



TOP LEFT:

Reception committee:
"Get a move on
Auntie Marian!"

BOTTOM LEFT:

Chris and Alison
Rudall's picturesque
home in Takum (far
right) thirty miles
from the nearest
road. Living
conditions are
altogether less
attractive. The
mountain behind is
Dhaulagiri, the sixth
highest mountain in
the world.

LEFT:

The kitchen. Chris's hi-tech high-level sink is an object of wonder in Takum where everyone else washes up at ground level.





TOP LEFT: Head office of the International Nepal Fellowship's West Myagdi **Community Health** Programme in Takum.

BOTTOM LEFT: The family at home

MARIAN WRITES:

In Liverpool they have a word for it: "nesh". It describes someone unable to cope with any sort of discomfort. Some might say it describes my reaction to the things I found hard to handle in Nepal which my brother-inlaw Chris and his wife Alison accept as a part of everyday life.

Cleanliness was an issue for me, especially after a three day walk wearing the same clothes in high temperatures. I was desperate for a shower and never has a bowlful of hot water been so appreciated. It's clearly impractical to attempt to maintain Western standards of cleanliness and there are not the same social pressures to wear clean clothes everyday in rural West Myagdi. Indeed, because the floors of Chris and Alison's house are made of mud, everything quickly attracts a layer of brown dust.

Many household tasks we take for granted in the Western world become major issues in Nepal. Is there any hot water in the Thermos flasks for washing up and rinsing? Is there filtered water available for cleaning teeth? But there are sometimes simple answers to familiar problems too and I noticed that the scourer for saucepans was a stone split by Didi to provide a flat abrasive surface. It was very

effective and environmentally friendly!

Cold was not a problem while we were there but in winter the temperatures sometimes demand up to eight layers of clothing to keep warm in a house which has plastic sheeting in some of the windows and simple wooden shutters in the others. The only form of heating is the wood fire used for cooking. Nobody would want to wash frequently in conditions like those! The "bathroom" is an outhouse with a cold water tap and a drain in the floor.

But set against all this is the breathtaking natural beauty of the mountains. Also beautiful were some of the paths we walked on up to Takum, over the top of occasional landslides, one of which had wiped out an entire village a few years previously, and across rickety bridges which needed some attention. A cow had fallen through one the morning before we used it.

The porters who carried our luggage moved gracefully and at a steady pace. We wore fell boots but they wore only flip-flops or thin canvas shoes and others we saw were barefoot. At one stage on the way home we passed porter after porter struggling under massive loads made up of 8ft lengths of polyethylene water pipe of

the kind Chris uses. None of them wore anything substantial on their feet as they picked their way along the path, rarely looking at the ground – something I did all the time.

To see all this filled me with amazement as I thought how Chris and Alison regularly entrusted their two small boys to porters like these to be carried in baskets over narrow slippery paths while they could only watch and keep them happy by telling them endless stories as they walked behind.

The path is the only route to civilisation -short of a helicopter - and if anyone needs medical attention they must summon the courage to walk or be carried the 30 miles to Baglung. One young woman on the staff at Takum earlier in the year was unable to face the trek at the end of a pregnancy which promised a difficult delivery. The westerners on the project tried to persuade her to make the journey, but she refused, preferring to stay in the village to die after an agonising labour. Things like that are hard to watch.

On getting home? I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to see Chris and Alison in their setting, but how grateful I am, too, that God has called me, for the time being anyway, to serve him in the UK!

teature

We all miss the warmth of the African sun on our backs. We are annoyed by having to take half an hour to dress up in order to go out for a walk in winter

Out of Africa

RICHARD AND ELISABETH SMITH TALK ABOUT WHERE HOME REALLY IS

ur ministry in Zaire came to a rather ungainly end with social and economic unrest and the seemingly timely intervention of French and Belgian paratroopers. The children were suddenly faced with being divorced from the country of their birth; we as their parents with a sad, rapid, yet strangely prolonged divorce from a life and ministry of over 10 years.

Richard began the long and frustrating search for a job in the UK which would be both worthwhile and support the family, after recognising that it was probably right to take time out from working with BMS. We felt very lonely and isolated whilst trying to discern the right way forward and the Will of God in all the turbulence, this inspite of the support and listening ear of BMS, family and friends, because at the end of the day, the agony and decision was ours alone. Even two to three years after the separation we wonder should we not have taken another path and perhaps pursued more actively a continued association with BMS and or missionary work.

After some nine months of concentrated effort, we felt relieved when a job came and we were able to look forward to owning, at long last, our own home and lead a 'normal' life. We soon found out that buying a house was neither cheap, easy and certainly not without numerous and deep pitfalls; on our third attempt we succeeded and this is now the first time in our married life when we haven't moved house in less than two years. Our house is rightly Africanised with oil paintings and various other memorabilia, even the house name is suitably Zairean; 'Lipamboli', meaning blessing, which, of course, it is but

there is still a strong part of us that would rather be living in the real thing. Every so often, one of the children will ask, "Can't we have mpondu (leaves of the manioc root eaten at every meal as the vegetable), beans and rice for dinner?" This was our staple diet in Zaire. We still eat a lot of beans and ours is one of very few homes in Horsham where no television resides and no, neither we, nor the children, miss it. We never needed one in Zaire, we really don't need one here either as there is always far too much else to do. We were paid a compliment very recently by a young university student member of our house group when he said that he was impressed by our lack of materialism, not that we can claim total success on this front. In Africa, we neither had, nor particularly wanted, the trappings of the Western world. Here in Britain we find that we are bombarded by the materialism of the environment in which we now move and work. Have you noticed how it is expected that you possess certain 'essentials' and you are thought a little eccentric when you do not conform to these expected norms of society. The children sometimes find that peer pressure in this regard is a problem but, for the majority of time, they are very laid back about the things which we do not have - their African upbringing maybe!

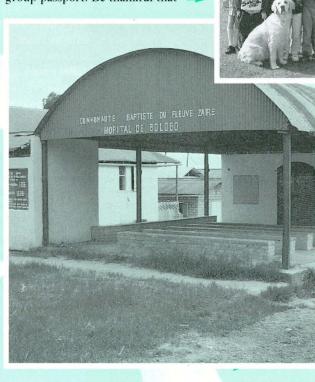
We all miss the warmth of the African sun on our backs, we are annoyed by having to take half an hour to dress up in order to go out for a walk in winter and the necessary encumbrance of scarves, coats, etc. It may seem a strange thing to say but we all miss the freedom we enjoyed there too. We are not really able to define what, precisely, that freedom was or is; it was part and parcel of life in Zaire. Not that life was a bed of roses because

most certainly it was not and there were many trials, frustrations, tribulations and crises. We miss the closeness of the missionary family in which we lived; our doors were always open, people came and went as they felt they wanted or needed to and it wasn't a nuisance or hassle. Here, it seems everyone's door is firmly closed and, of course, leaving your front door open in modern day Britain is to invite theft and Jack Frost to invade 'your space'. We miss being involved in mission.

The children are still fiercely proud of having been born in Africa and it is not unusual for them to be teased at school for being 'African', not that to look at them you would consider them anything other than British. Claire had a school trip to France recently that caused slight consternation and extra form-filling to allow her to be a legitimate British citizen on the school group passport. Be thankful that

BELOW: Bolobo hospital where Richard Smith was a nurse

INSET: Missing Zaire — the Smith family





Out of Africa

we don't have to fill in forms to get into heaven!

We find talking to people about life in Zaire difficult. We have come to the conclusion that unless people have had that same experience or similar, then their understanding is always going to be limited and fenced in by preconceived, dare we say it, Western indoctrination. If you are good at reading between the lines you will know already that we are not entirely settled and that things African which we see or hear make us homesick. We pray continually that the Lord will be gracious to that great and wonderful continent in all its trials, tribulations and that He will keep its people warm, friendly and open as they are. Personally, we continue to search and wonder what the future holds for us trying, as did Paul, to put the past behind us and run the race set before us by our Lord. We daily ask God for discernment concerning the future, asking Him to show the way.

PRAYER POINTS

- For Africa and its people. So much to pray for; their salvation; their freedom; their food; their health; their children's education.
- For the African Church. That it would be a light shining in the desert, unafraid to proclaim the Gospel, to speak out against injustice.
- For Ourselves.

That we would discern God's way; that we keep our African inheritance; and maintain our contentment with the necessities rather than the 'essentials' of life.

WE MAY BE SEPARATED BY ONLY 22 MILES OF WATER BUT **CULTURALLY** THERE'S A GULF BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND **BRITISH ANALYSES**

The French

They look like us, live near us, have houses like us, roads, schools, hospitals, churches like us – surely they must BE like us. On face value, you would never think that English missionaries would encounter cross-cultural problems working in France but putting aside all those things that make us "alike" there are many adjustments that need to be made in order to relate in the French culture. We have often commented that we are nearer to French

culture than American culture, even though we share the same language as the Americans, but being "nearer" to their culture doesn't imply similarity in our ways of thinking and reacting.

French Mentality

The French are very much influenced by the idea that man has the ability to solve his own problems. C S Lewis's "God in the Dock" is a good example. There was a time when man had to justify himself before God. In France,

God has to justify Himself before man! The idea of absolutes is missing – one sole authority - the only absolute is that there are no absolutes. Each man has built around himself his own philosophy and prides himself on respecting the philosophies of others but in reality he has taken a bit of what he likes from various philosophies which forms a framework for what he believes or not. It's rather like a man trying to keep 50 plates spinning all at



once - if you have the chance to speak to him about God he sees God as another plate he can spin at the same time as the others. But as there is no absolute truth, not one way which is better than the others, the implications of the verse, "I am the Way, The Truth and the Life", is hard to swallow. The average French person is very much an independent free spirit who needs the conviction of the Holy Spirit to recognise his need of God.

In general, we have found the French way of life much more laid back than in England. The advantage is that you can work and live at the same pace. The disadvantage is that decision-making is often frustratingly drawn out. In fact, the reluctance to make decisions underlies a deeper problem – the reluctance to be responsible for something. There are three options: you say "yes" and hope the pastor does it; you say "yes" and that implies it's up to me to do it; or you say "no" and nobody does it (leaving the leadership frustrated)!

The Church

Being Catholic in France is more than a commitment to the Church. It is also often linked with patriotism and respect for family tradition. This is why the Catholics who we have come across may agree entirely with what we tell them about the Bible and biblical doctrine but would never put a foot in a Protestant church because they would see this as some sort of betrayal to their families and even their country. On the other hand, many French people are so disillusioned with the Catholic Church and what they have been taught that they close the door on God (as if He is just a sort of policeman breathing down their necks) ->



Why on earth did God choose to give the apostles the gift of 'tongues' on the day of Pentecost? Why not something less controversial? He must have known what a bone of contention it would prove. Couldn't he have made the disciples glow instead — a bit like Moses on Mount Sinai? Wasn't there another way to produce the spectacular evangelistic result he wanted without all the subsequent hassle?

But to ask this is to miss the whole point. The truth is that tongues were the obvious, the only appropriate gift for the occasion, because these tongues weren't the kind that charismatics and anticharismatics have spent so long tragically fighting over. They were not the 'tongues of angels' needing interpreation but ordinary languages, comprehensible to those listening As the crowd that had gathered from across the Middle East pointed out: "All these people speaking are Galileans aren't they? So how come each of us hears in our own mother tongue?"

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was given to equip the Church to present the good news about Jesus to everyone in a way they can understand and relate to — in their own language and culture. When Jesus told us to go to all peoples, he didn't just mean physically. It's clear from his example that he meant culturally as well. John's gospel spells it out: "The Word became human." But the truth is that God didn't just become a man. He became a particular kind of man; an olive-skinned, Aramaic-speaking, Galillean-accented, circumcised, poor carpenter's son from 1st century Palestine. That's what incarnation is — it's specific.

Likewise, it's our responsibility to ensure the gospel truly relates to our specific audience; that it is doctrinally sound and culturally accessible. But now for the sobering part. The gospel was expressed in the language of the crowd on the day of Pentecost as a result of God's supernatural intervention. But the rest of the book of Acts is an account of the Church's struggle to understand what it meant to present their message in a gentile context.

This is still the issue for the Church today. In the context of world mission, must a person adopt Western culture in order to become a Christian? And nearer to home, must a 19 year-old immersed in club culture suddenly develop a liking for the organ and the Baptist Hymn Book or, for that matter, even the keyboard and Spring Harvest Praise, as part of their conversion?

During the last century, most Western missionaries had no idea they were exporting a whole lot more than pure gospel. Today, we are rediscovering the need for missionaries working in other cultures to learn to 'speak in tongues'. But have we learned to apply the same principles at home?

Steve Chalke is General Director of Oasis Trust.

continued for page 9

and the Bible (often seen as a penal code!). From our experience, the God of the Catholics we know bears no resemblance to the God of the Bible whom we know as a God of love. justice, grace and forgiveness. One Catholic lady said to us the other day, "There is no good news in what I believe about God".

On the other hand, the French are very open to spiritual things. The problem is that they may not search for the answer to their spiritual hunger in the right place. The world of the occult is flooding the advertisement columns of newspapers - healers, fortune tellers, spiritual counsellors and all of them just a phone call away.

The Family

Family tends to be very close-knit almost to the exclusion of others. To be invited into a French home tends to be quite a formal affair for the first time. The French pride themselves on their savoir faire. The house is spotless, table elaborately dressed with numerous knives, forks, spoons and glasses and this is overwhelmingly impressive. Even the way they eat and appreciate each course makes our way of eating a sort of sacrilege. You need to be prepared to stay at the table for two, three or four hours because the meal is the centre-piece around which you sit and converse.

Invitations to us were slow in coming at the beginning – English, ie. foreigner, probably not staying in the town for a reasonable period of time and, therefore, not worth getting to know! When people realised that we were hoping to live in Clermont-Ferrand for at least five years or more it was just the suspicion of being a pastor in a Protestant church which was the final obstacle to conquer; fear of establishing a friendship with



people who were in some kind of sect! Then, of course, it was our turn to invite them back... panic!! I certainly didn't want to shock our friends by our food being crammed on the plate and the whole meal finished in half an hour! So I watched, experimented, bought a decent French cookery book and invited our French friends. The home, family, eating together all speaks of a certain intimacy. I felt vulnerable, as if we'd be judged by our French friends, but in fact it wasn't like that at all. Entertaining and hospitality are easier now and once the friendship is established, the food is not as important as time spent together.

Education and Schooling

The French education system and intellectual attainment are extremely important. School life begins from two and a half when unsuspecting toddlers are ushered into "Maternelle". There are no facilities for children to take packed lunches; they eat in the school restaurant (f.3 per meal) or at home. Primary school is for ages six to 10; college from ages 11 to 15 and lycee ages 16 to 18. If you don't make the grade you stay down a year.

Children are very much under

pressure to succeed at school - there is little encouragement if you show yourself capable and lots of humiliation if you are not. We try to instil in our children that we are happy if they do their best but there is very much a spirit of competition and rivalry. It is hard for a French person to congratulate another on good results as it is too threatening.

Medical Systems and Health

If education is a sort of "god of the age" then health is too. Medical visits are paid for at £,18 a time plus the medicines prescribed and which you buy at the chemist shop. In the smallest of French towns you will generally find a baker, a church and a chemist. The reasoning behind this is prevention rather than cure.

I've never seen such extensive medical boxes as I've seen in French homes - some take up a whole cupboard! Obviously, my treatment of a cold, a dose of Calpol and a sniff of Vicks, is not enough. A runny nose calls for an appointment with the doctor or your child might pass on germs to another one. Subconsciously, you begin to feel as though you are an inferior mother because you don't go to the doctor straight away, your child doesn't wear a bonnet when it just starts to get cold and your child doesn't wear slippers in the house!

At the end of the day, my children are neither less nor more ill than any other - its just a question of culture, you see!

Neil and Ruth Abbott are BMS missionaries in Clemont Ferrand, France, with their children, Hannah and Daniel.

news



Literally...a lifeline

You are a missionary in a foreign land, living with an alien culture. You struggled to learn a new language. All around you everything is written and spoken in that language.

You begin to wonder-what's happening back in the old

Then it hits you. Am I still up to date? Have I missed something? Keyhole surgery – sounds like a locksmith's nightmare. Gigabyte chips – help! And what's happening to fashion?

There is something lacking in your life. Something to read. The Missionaries' Literature Association (MLA), which exists to plug that gap, is seeking sponsors to pay for newspapers, magazines and periodicals to send to missionaries.

Treasurer, John Chamberlain says the value of its service lies not only in the technical and professional areas but also current affairs, leisure and entertainment. The MLA is just as happy to provide missionaries abroad with the Weekly Guardian, Telegraph, Woman's Weekly, or Nursing Times as it is to send Playdays, Nintendo or the Beano.

"These are their choices, not ours," says John. "Missionaries can read about changes in attitudes, their professions, or street culture for kids. They may not approve of the changes but at least they'll be aware of them before they run straight into problems."

MLA supporters in Britain help in a number of ways: Sponsors pay for a magazine and postage and the MLA orders and sends it; contributors make one-off or regular donations to the MLA general fund; others who buy magazines for themselves, send them on to missionaries.

"In the latter cases we ask supporters not to cut anything out and to send copies by air mail," says John. Missionaries treat the MLA as a lifeline. John Clark, in Fortaleza, Brazil, says he values the Guardian Weekly, which is devoured by him, his wife Norma, and son Daniel, and then passed to Mary Parsons.

"It's certainly well used," he reported. "We don't know who the sponsor is but we're grateful to God for this ministry."

While in Cameroon, Andy Wilson found that his Classic Cars magazine not only provided him with information to help him maintain the mission's vehicles, but brought back memories of cars he once looked after on the estate of an English earl.

Sian Williams, BMS Director for Missionaries, is thrilled by the effect magazines from home can have on missionaries' morale. "All those I've spoken to have been warm in their praise of those who send them papers," she says.

More information: Telephone Christine Neilson, BMS Literature Secretary, (01235 512077) for an MLA leaflet or write to John Chamberlain at 39 Charlesworth Drive, Waterlooville, Hants,



Wheelie good gift

BMS missionaries Ryder and Heather Rogers have their first pair of wheels in Albania thanks to a PIPs project, which has raised £1,500 for a Piaggio motor scooter. And before it was dispatched, Mandy Ponting - secretary to

John Passmore, the BMS Europe representative tried it for size.

The 50cc ride-about is a good investment for Ryder and Heather, who live in Bregu, a suburb of Tirana. Unlike a car, they will be able to take the scooter indoors at night to prevent it being stolen and to thwart the thieves when they are making pastoral visits.

John Passmore says: "They had no transport at all, so its arrival at Christmas was an added bonus."

Stamps of Success

A total of £5,500 has been given to the BMS general fund by the society's Stamp Bureau, which handled more than a ton of stamps donated by supporters.

This figure was achieved last year despite static prices and a difficult stamp trade.

The bureau, run by Richard Camp, of Telford, Douglas Neilson, of Dundee, and David Beaumont, received 1,014 parcels containing more than seven million stamps and weighing in at 1,027 kilograms.

David (pictured right), who operates the kiloware/sorting department at Baptist House, Didcot, every Wednesday, had the stamps trimmed and sorted by local volunteers before passing 97kg to the bureau's foreign

department, run by Douglas, and 42kg to the Great Britain department, run by Richard.

The remaining 964kg were sold in bulk as kiloware – the name used to describe stamps stuck on paper – for f, 1,692.

In addition to stamps from Didcot, Richard also receives

some from local churches and buys stamps to meet special orders. During the year he bought heavily but expects the outlay of £1,068 to be realised during the next two or three years. His sales at stamp fairs last year yielded £614 and he raised £2,255 through mail orders.

Douglas, who is thankful for the help of local volunteers

for sorting and soaking stamps off paper, made £2,449, mainly through mail

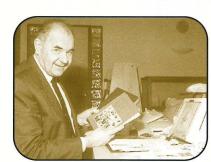
A small coin department, run by Richard, and a card department, run by Chris Breakell, of Shrewsbury, raised

Expenses, including stamps bought for resale, stamp fair fees, catalogues and postage, came to £1,886.

Richard, who describes the bureau's year-end result as highly satisfactory, says it would not have been possible without support from collectors and those

"We're very grateful and thank God for the interest and concern that all this represents," he said.

who trimmed and sorted stamps.



Stamp sale **CALLING**

COLLECTORS!

Packets of 100 off-paper foreign and Commonwealth stamps (mainly large) available post-free (UK). Packets contain no mainland GB stamps.

British Commonwealth £5.00 Western Europe £4.00 World mix £3.00 £3.20 USA commems.

HOW TO ORDER

Please state your name, address and requirements on a small sheet of paper and enclose with a selfaddressed envelope and a cheque/postal order for the correct amount to: D. G. Neilson, 4 Argyle Street, Dundee, DD4 7AL.

Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to BMS Stamp Bureau.

Roger's home mission role

Roger Collinson is the new Home Mission Co-ordinator for Berkshire and Southern Baptist Associations.

Roger and his wife, Angela, returned last year after spending five years as BMS missionaries in a church-planting role in Rio Grande, Brazil.

Before their offer of service to the BMS, Roger was minister at Stoke Road Baptist Church, Gosport, and had served 34 years with the Royal Navy.

His new job involves promoting home mission as part of a comprehensive mission strategy.

500 mourn loss of Simon

More than 500 attended the funeral in November of Simon Houghton, who died of heart failure at the age of 36.

Simon, chaplain at Sevenoaks School, Kent, had been assistant minister and later minister at St Andrew's Street Baptist Church, Cambridge, after three years as a BMS missionary in Zaire.

Simon became a Christian while reading zoology at Durham University and, after graduation, his offer of service as a teacher abroad was accepted by the BMS. He leaves a widow, Clare, and a 19-month-old daughter, Emily.



You can go Around the World in 132 Ways with the new BMS catalogue. This free colour guide to BMS products is packed with information about books, publications,

Christine Neilson — Off the shelf

videos, leaflets and audio visual resources. It's easy to read and easy to order. Catch it in the car, hear

it on your hi-fi . . . wherever you listen to it, WorldWide MasterTracks (£2.50) will inspire you. The monthly BMS prayer

tape service now brings you a special series of key speakers on world mission. First is Stuart Christine, BMS missionary in the favelas of Brazil.

 Call Christine, BMS Literature Secretary, on 01235 512077.

Surprise at intolerance

A workshop organised by the Conference of European Churches (CEC) in the Czech Republic town of Vilemov expressed surprise about worsening religious persecution of Bulgarian evangelicals, reports Stanley Crabb, EBPS.

Theo Angelov, vicepresident of the Bulgaria Evangelical Alliance, told 32 delegates from Eastern European countries that Baptists and other mainline Christian churches were considered sects by the government and media.

He showed newspaper articles which suggested an all-out campaign to destroy non-Orthodox believers and described attempts by the Bulgarian government and the country's Orthodox Church to discredit all non-Orthodox denominations.

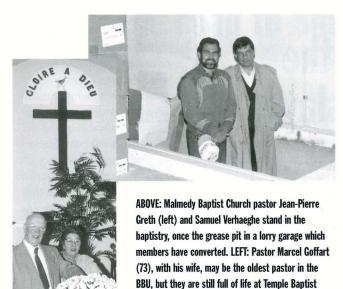
This, says Angelov, is a shift from the freedom evangelicals enjoyed during the first two years of democracy. The CEC will monitor Bulgarian concerns and organise a similar workshop later this year.

Italian gift to Tirana

The Italian Baptist Union (IBU) is to sell a property in the southern town of Conversano in aid of church work in Albania's capital, Tirana. IBU president Renato Maiocchi said the money would help the Tirana church, at present meeting in a cinema, to buy its own building, and an advance of 60 million lire (£20,000) has been made.

The BMS has a major role in church-planting and evangelism in Albania.

Belgian growth



Church, Mont sur Marschienne

(Pictures: EBPS, Hamburg)

Encouraging signs of growth have been recorded among Belgium's Baptists, a group of 19 churches and 850 baptised members. And they are not short on determination, either, reports Stanley Crabb, EBPS.

The Belgian Baptist Union (BBU) president, Samuel Verhaeghe, and secretary Gaston Wathieu, took a European Baptist Press Service representative on tour for talks with pastors, families and church members.

At several locations they found church members renovating recently bought old buildings for use as worship areas, training rooms and even a library. The activity is a result of a BBU strategy supporting Baptist leaders' feelings that their buildings, often uninviting and shabby, should be improved to eliminate the embarrassment felt by members who wanted to invite outsiders. Other signs of development,

reported by the tour group, are that:

- Sunday morning attendance is often nearly double the number of baptised members.
- Most Belgian pastors are under 40 years of age.
- A building project at Ougrée, Belgium's oldest Baptist church, is nearing completion.
- At the new Baptist Theological Seminary of Belgium some 90 people have enrolled.
- Since its birth almost 10 years ago, the Aywaille Christian Centre has grown to some 90 adults and children in its regular congregation, 20 of whom are baptised members. The BMS is significantly involved in church work in Belgium and in October accepted an offer of service by Paul and Linda Ellis, who will start work after a period of training, bringing the total number of partnership personnel there to four.

Prisoners of superstition

Christians globally are this month praying for freedom from fear for the 1.8 million Komering people in the south of Sumatra, Indonesia, reports YWAM's News Service.

Theirs is a Muslim faith mixed with traditional beliefs about evil spirits which influence their lives.

It is estimated that up to five million Christians are spending the Islamic month of Ramadan – from January 21 to February 19 – praying for this Sumatran group, who live in stilt homes along the Komering River.

Among the superstitions are a fear that whistling indoors at night might entertain demonic forces and a dread of walking about on one's birthday for fear of bad fortune.

While dramatic church growth has been seen in other parts of Indonesia, the strength of Islam and the dense Sumatran jungle is a challenge to Christians.

The month of prayer was founded in 1992 by Youth With a Mission and has grown into an independent ministry.

The BMS is in partnership with Indonesia's Baptist union, (Karapatan Gereja Baptis Indonesia) working in northern Sumatra. The union aims to plant a church in every district of the country's 27 provinces.

Christians free

The group of 11 Nepali Christians, jailed for allegedly converting Hindus to Christianity, have been freed following prayer by churches internationally.

FOREIGN

Scandal of the **Ghana sex slaves**

IF YOU SIN IN GHANA, ATONEMENT CAN COST YOU YOUR DAUGHTER. **CLIVE DOUBLEDAY REPORTS**

In Ghana, as many as 20,000 girls, some as young as eight, are being forced into slavery. Today, the Trokosi (virgin of a god) system, as it is known in Ghana's Volta region, thrives in spite of the abolition of slavery by the British over 100 years ago in this former West African Gold Coast colony.

In July 1994, the Ghana **Baptist Convention invited**

"The spirit of the

Sovereign Lord is

on Me. because

the Lord has

anointed Me to

preach good news

to the poor. He has

sent Me to bind up

the broken-

hearted, to

proclaim freedom

for the captives."

Isaiah chapter 61 v1

five London Baptist ministers to preach and minister in some of the 500 churches throughout the nation. Although the delegation were greatly encouraged by the spiritual growth and hospitality for which the Ghanaians are famous, they were appalled to discover the evil practice of child slavery.

Under the Trokosi system, fetish priests are consulted by those who have recently

experienced a number of deaths among their family members. The fetish priest concludes that members of the family, either past or present, must have violated or sinned against the gods. The offence, which may be as trivial as stealing a chicken or as serious as murder, is divined by the fetish priest.

The only atonement for such a sin requires that the family hand over one of their young virgin daughters — usually aged 12 but can be as young as eight — who becomes a slave to the fetish priest for life. Her duties are to work long days, planting and harvesting crops on the land belonging to the priest. She also serves as a handmaiden, caring for the local fetish shrines as well as becoming the fetish priest's housekeeper and wife.

The girls sent to the shrine are reduced to menial and sexual slavery, producing as many children as the priest demands. They become his possessions for life, working 12 hours a day in high temperatures, with their small and fragile babies strapped upon their backs, which they have to feed and care for themselves. The young women do not receive any reward for their labours as the family is held

responsible for providing food and clothing.

Any one shrine may have between 20 and 60 girls or women in their service. The vestal virgins, as they are called, are denied any formal education, subjected to many forms of harsh treatment, including forced labour, denied access to proper medical care and the basic necessities of life.

The family must also replace a girl should she die in slavery. Even though this gross act of child abuse openly violates the Ghanaian constitution on human rights, as well as the UN rights for children worldwide, Ghana's president, I J Rawlings, who took power through a coup, defends it as a cultural tradition and one of religious freedom and practice, which is all part of Ghana's rich heritage.

The truth is, more probably, that he does not wish to upset local chiefs and priests, or lose government support by challenging or outlawing this practice.

Over the past 18 months, the five British Baptist ministers who visited Ghana

have established a charity called the Ghana Christian Support Group, whose aim is to encourage and support the Ghana Baptist Convention as it

lobbies government for the abolition of these practices.

Already, talks have taken place at the House of Lords, the Foreign Office, with local MPs and Ghanaian politicians. The practice has received exposure in the Sunday Times, Marie Claire magazine and on radio. There are plans for a TV

documentary later this year.

However, it is one thing to pass a law but quite another to enforce it in the remote, inaccessible villages. So the Ghana Baptist Convention plans to build a rehabilitation centre to provide accommodation, medical care, schooling and vocational training for the young girls in the future. On offer would be skilled training, including cloth and mat weaving, sewing and dressmaking, pottery and home gardening. It is hoped to help girls establish their





own businesses and become self-supporting.

The support group has also been raising funds to sink fresh water wells and pay for teaching at ministerial Bible schools and at the Baptist Seminary in Kumasi. The group also helps supply theological books for the seminary as

well as practical support for church planting and evangelism nationally.

Encouragingly, young Baptist minister Pastor Wisdom, who has planted more than 30 Baptist churches in the Volta region in the past five years, has seen much spiritual fruit, in spite of opposition and death threats from fetish priests and chiefs. As Christianity spreads, the light of Christ dispels the darkness of superstition and fear, replacing it with joy and hope.



ABOVE: Children of the Volta region - could one of these end up as a vestal virgin? LEFT: A poky circular hut is home to many vestal virgins

 If you would like to support and receive the newsletter from the Ghana Christian Support Group, please write to the Revd Clive Doubleday, 117 Kingsway, Petts Wood, Orpington, Kent, BR5 1PP.

Clive Doubleday is minister of Poverest Road Baptist Church, Petts Wood, and a member of the BMS General Committee.

UPDATE

The road to Shkrete

Albanians have in the past turned inaccessibility to their advantage. For 26 years in the 15th century the warrior hero, Skenderbeg, held at bay the Ottoman armies attempting to capture his stronghold at Kruja. In World War II, the Partizans similarly used their knowledge of local terrain to discomfort the invading German armies. Today, the situation is different.

People from the mountain village of Shkrete do come down to Tirana; rarely do people from the city venture into the mountains where the Code of Lek, described by Glyn Jones (Missionary Herald, November/December), perpetuates the blood feuds which have plagued Albanian society for centuries. Lack of contact and communication breeds suspicion and prejudice. It seems that the mountain dwellers are regarded as different by those in the towns. Indeed, those who seek closer contact with such outlying settlements face a hazardous journey. The road to Shkrete, closed for months at a time by snow, is constantly eroded and often swept away by rain and melt water and is then impassable even by Land Rover.

David Wheeler, BMS missionary working with the European Baptist Federation (EBF) in Albania, is a trained civil engineer and he believes that an adequate line of communication to the mountain communities is a vital pre-requisite to improving the quality of village life. By providing a route along which the produce of upland farms can reach a market and by facilitating the return flow of medical and technical assistance, David knows that a way will then be opened for missionaries carrying the good news to establish a more than occasional contact with spiritually needy people.

He plans to use money from US Baptists (CBF) and an ample supply of local labour, currently unemployed, to build drainage channels and culverts along the route as it winds and climbs from the village of Nuaj to the commune of Cudhi where Shkrete is situated. A gang of men and a mechanical digger have begun operations at the Nuaj end of the road and 1.5km of surface has already been drained and consolidated. As work proceeds more local labour will be recruited from roadside homes and protective Wellington boots for them have been donated by people from Carshalton Beeches Baptist

It may be a straightforward plan at first sight but nothing is simple in Albania. Questions like: "Who works?", "What's the pay?" and "What's in it for me?"

need to be addressed with fairness and tact but David has, at least, got the show on the road and, in due course, a lifeline will have been thrown to some of Skenderbeg's descendants in highland Albania.

SKENDERBEG, named Gjeraj Kastrioti, was born in 1405. He was the only survivor when taken hostage with his three brothers and became a Muslim, entering the Ottoman army where he distinguished himself as a commander. He was given the name Skenderbeg — Skender is Albanian for Alexander (the Great) and Beg, a title signifying bravery. In 1443 he suddenly left the Ottoman army and returned to Albania where he became the leader of resistance to the Turkish invasion and re-converted to Christianity. He resisted Ottoman attacks for 26 years using the citadel of Kruje as his base and was named Champion of Christendom by the Pope.

Skenderbeg died in 1468 of malaria and is buried at Lezhe, northern Albania.

Roger Cady

The treacherous road to Shkrete, passable at the best of times only by four-wheel drive vehicles, is being upgraded by missionaries to clear the way for the gospel of truth





Dates for your diary

Western Association Missionary Weekend Details: Miss Pauline Trounson 01297 442583

March 2/3

Cardiff District Missionary Weekend Details: Miss Beryl Davies 01222 756426

March 5

Newport and District Women's Missionary Auxiliary

Details: Mrs K Wilkie 01633 894427

March 6

West of Scotland Missionary Auxiliary Details: Mrs Freda Kennedy 0141-632 0883

March 11

West of Scotland Women's Missionary Fellowship

Details: Mrs Ann Durning 0141-641 6248

March 23/24

Scotland BMM 50th Annual Conference

Details: The Secretary, Dr Ken Stewart 01236 738444

Scotland Women's Auxiliary Annual Conference Details: Secretary, Mrs Margaret Brown 01294 465886

Missionary tales

On the wrong lines

I hear the familiar squeal of metal on metal which tells me that I have about 17 seconds to cover the distance I normally saunter in two minutes. The train is early. I rush on to the platform, jump into the carriage and, with a nonchalance which tells the well-known faces who do this journey with me each day that I could have done it in half the time if I'd wanted, I smile, open my bag and casually fish for something to read; a chance to melt in with a compartment full of Financial Times, Daily Mails and The Sporting Life.

No daily paper.

OK... I notice that my travelling companion opposite is reading Jeffrey Archer.

No book.

My hand settles on a sheaf of A4 sheets which I withdraw with an air of professionalism that wouldn't look uncomfortable on a business entrepreneur about to cast a confident eye over a healthy half-year financial statement. The sheaf fans out on my briefcase.

Missionary prayer letters! Dozens of them.

Newspapers rustle attentively. The Jeffrey Archer devotee cursorily examines my reading matter.

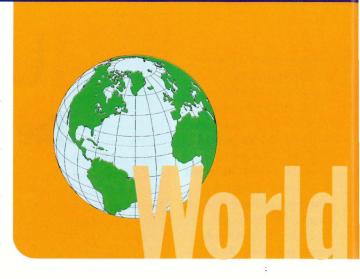
Do they look shocked, perhaps a little embarrassed?

Do they move to other seats? Do they ask guestions?

No, this is England and we don't do such things on the morning train. Now had it been Bangladesh or Brazil the questions about my unusual reading matter would have come more quickly than I could answer.

Of course there is one thing that gets us talking on the train — delays and cancellations. It's amazing to see how bad news breaks down the English reserve.

But when it comes to the Good News . . .



fter nine months of planning and preparation the day had finally

arrived, writes Maggi Bass. It was time for the BMS 20-20 Vision team to take the stage at Peterborough.

But at 2pm panic was setting in. Only 30 people had arrived.

This turned out to be because of road shopping traffic and 15 minutes later, 150 were off to the creche, a lively fives to 11s programme and workshops and seminars for adults.

People had come from as far as Norfolk and Derbyshire to the Saturday 20-20 Vision presentation. It included seminars on praying with missionaries, practical experience of life in a refugee camp and a meeting with Valentina Mema, BMS scholarship holder from Albania studying church management at St Andrew's College, Birmingham, whose testimony featured in the BMS Project 95, Breaking Chains.

Tea separated the



Inspiration be because of road works and Christmas for mission

seminars from the main event - a 90-minute multi-media presentation using drama, quizzes, music and audio-visuals on a huge screen, to inspire and motivate Christians in mission.

Hours of work had gone into the event; I only wish every member of every church involved had been there. On the Sunday, when team members spoke at local churches, the teaching would have inspired many to mission involvement.

The Peterborough event was one of the last in the BMS 20-20 Vision roadshow series. This year, incoming president Carolyn Green will tour the UK with a BMS team. Inspiration, motivation, ideas, news on world mission for churches...

Missinn



ABOVE:

BMS 20-20 Vision team members Audrey Rowland and Phil Marsden get to grips with a menu for world mission in one of the multi-media presentation dramas TOP RIGHT:

Celebration time at New Milton Baptist Church after raising £300 for the BMS children's project

Cash continues to pour in

Youngsters throughout Britain have rallied with enthusiasm to the call for support for the BMS Deka Bangladesh project. Many have broken their targets.

And with the dawn of the WOW Children's Project 96 - By His Stripes, in aid of medical work in India fund-raising for last year's project is still going strong.

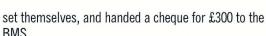
More than £2,000 beyond the target has been raised to help the school for blind girls in Bangladesh and children used a wide variety of fund-raising methods to achieve this blockbusting effort.

A small group from Great Sampford Baptist Sunday school in Essex burst their £50 target by £20. Marjorie Wilson says: "The children's enthusiasm was very

> encouraging. We learned a lovely song entitled Thank You Lord for my Eyes, which brought them to a closer feeling of how is must feel to be blind."

> > Now they are looking forward to getting involved in the WOW project.

At New Milton, Hants, children most of them from non-church families quadrupled the target they had



try to understand what it meant to be blind. Then they made collecting boxes, organised a sponsored walk by the sea and arranged a coffee morning.

Hugglescote Baptist Sunday school doubled its target by fund-raising from a car wash, a fun run, a bring-and-buy sale and a disco.

Members of the Junior Christian Endeavour at Pinhoe Road Baptist Church, Exeter, collected the toys and books they no longer needed and sold them, while at King Street Baptist Sunday school, Oldham, youngsters decorated empty film cartridges and collected 2p coins in them. This, along with the sale of self-designed Christmas cards, brought their total to more than £130.

At Whetstone Bapstist Church, Sunday school members spent the year putting 5p pieces into a jar. At the end of the year they had raised £220.

Tracy Roslyn, who has been co-ordinating the Deka Bangladesh project at the BMS, said the school was very grateful for the generosity of children in Britain's Baptist churches. "Everyone seems to have had a wonderful time raising money for the school for the blind," she said. "I'm sure some of these ideas will be useful for the new project."



Dear Audrey...

Q. We've been told that we must get our Link-Up missionaries Prayer letters from our Link-Up Contact why? Surely this means they take longer to arrive?

A. With nearly 550 Link-Up groups, involving more than 2,000 churches we need a way of keeping in touch that is both efficient and not unduly costly. The way chosen is for each group to have a CONTACT; they act as an efficient POST-BOX for the Link-Up group. While prayer letters will take a couple of days longer to reach each church in the group, the advantages of the Contact system far outweighs this small delay – it saves BMS time and money, means we have an efficient and quick way of getting in touch with any Link-Up group, and, from the churches side, enables the Contact to have regular communication with the churches in the group. The problem with changing the normal process for one

or two groups means that we risk either duplicating some things or missing some people off other Link-up mailings. Modern technology is wonderful but it doesn't seem to cope efficiently with too many exceptions to the rule.



A welcome to where the chur

VETERAN MISSIONARY MARGARET GRENFELL RECEIVED VIP TREATMENT WHEN SHE RETURNED TO SPEND HER 90th BIRTHDAY IN THE WAR-RAVAGED ANGOLA SHE GREW TO LOVE AS A MISSIONARY. **SANDRA CARTER** REPORTS

he banknotes pile so high in the Sunday collection that they use washing up bowls to collect it. But its size in Angolan churches doesn't reflect their wealth. It's because inflation rockets at 1,737% a year – 1 million kwanzas to the pound. The economic ordeals of the people soar to match.

Angola – torn by three decades of civil war, economy in tatters, studded with millions of land mines – is the country Margaret Grenfell chose to visit to celebrate her 90th birthday last August. She also took badly needed medical equipment for church dispensaries. It proved an emotional homecoming to the land she learned to love during 34 years as a BMS nurse.

"We were overwhelmed by the love and welcome we received everywhere. So many people came to talk to me who had known us when we were working there. I even met a few from my first term as a missionary in 1933!"

For this war-torn
African country taking
tentative steps back into
the international
community, Margaret's
visit with her son,
Stephen, and his wife,
Linda, became something
of a VIP event. Press and
TV highlighted their
farewell feast and
recorded her preaching in
Kikongo to the delight of
old friends.

The man who is now Angola's equivalent of

Attorney General greeted Stephen enthusiastically. Stephen said: "He came along with his chauffeur and bodyguard, saying, 'I remember playing with you in the Lussenguele River in Kibokolo.' He was one of the many who had attended school at our mission base there." Stephen returned to school in Britain at the age of six.

The United Nations brokered a fragile peace 1994, just in time for Margaret to plan her birthday trip to the capital, Luanda. Did she find the work of missionaries since 1878 had borne fruit – or did the war years destroy it all?

Certainly the signs of destruction are unmissable, she reports. Rubbish is everywhere. Roads are impassable. Street kids roam the capital, either orphaned or sent to the city to fend for themselves. Banditry is rampant. Abandoned half-built tower blocks with no side walls are used as homes; 14 floors up a family will be living with children running around. Margaret was told: "You'll hear gunfire all night, just turn over and go to sleep."

But she found the church strong and vibrant amid the chaos. "The church is alive! We found the people full of the joy of the Lord. Here even a small church has 800 people. One has a Sunday school of 1,000 and 1,800 attending each Sunday. They are well grounded Christians. To see the kind of love they have today is humbling."

At the outbreak of the war of independence in 1961, the future looked bleak as traditional mission work came to an abrupt end.

"The fighting to win independence from Portugal, which had ruled Angola for 400 years, brought chaos to our area in Kibokolo. Almost overnight everyone disappeared, fleeing into the bush or over the border.

"One evening we were just going to have supper when we heard hundreds of women going by, with loads on their heads and children on their backs. The Portuguese had started bombing their villages and they were fleeing to the border with Zaire 70km away.

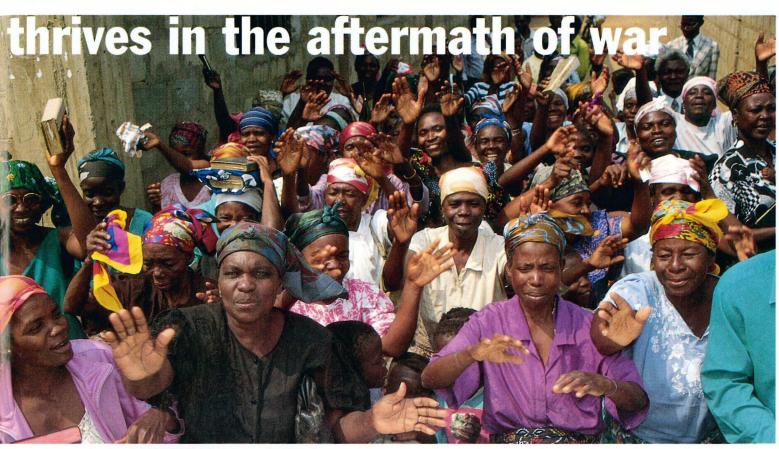
"The rebels would come to a village and say to the pastor, 'we have no quarrel with you'. The next week government troops would come through and say, 'if they didn't kill you, you must be siding with the rebels'. So



they killed the villagers. Anyone with a pen was killed – they could read and write and were potential leaders.

"Our senior nurse, a very dear man, was taken and killed. We decided we were needed now where the church was – among the refugees in Zaire."

Margaret, her minister husband David and other mission staff worked among the refugees in Zaire for the next six years, setting up village schools and rehabilitation centres and caring for the sick. She recalls: "It was really tragic. There were little children shattered by mines, so ill-nourished it





was like picking up a couple of empty tins. Yet I look back on it as a marvellous time of team work with laughter as well as tears."

Recalling those early days she said: "We made our life out there and loved the people. It was home. But as a mother it was terrible. Today there are schools for missionary children, but ours had to be sent home to boarding school and we only saw them during furloughs. I think it had a long-term effect on my three children. It's part of the price of mission. Angola robbed them of their parents. Fortunately we

had a big and secure extended family who cared for them at home."

The final years of warfare and refugee work took their toll on David. She recalls: "He was shattered. He was bursting with all the tragedy of Angola and wrote letters to the press and to anyone else he could influence. We went twice to America to speak at the United Nations and in Washington."

The couple finally returned to Britain at the age of 62. Retirement wasn't an option for Margaret. For the

next 12 years she was a night duty nurse at a home for retired nurses in Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, not far from the old family home.

David died in 1980 but at 90 Margaret is still active at Rickmansworth Baptist Church.

During the dark years of civil war the BMS helped where it could. The fact that almost half a million Angolans fled the country brought a few bonuses. Many were helped to get Bible training and returned as strong

Christian leaders.

One of the tragedies of Angola is that it could be so wealthy. Five times the size of Great Britain, it has natural riches to rival South Africa. Oil earns a lavish revenue but some 80% of it is believed to have gone to the war effort.

The BMS has a partnership with the Evangelical Baptist Church of Angola and has given grants for needs such as medical work and church roofing. British doctor Simon Collins is responding to the churches' request for

> medical help and travels to Angola with the BMS later this year. Partner churches are contributing to a new project to help Luanda's street kids.

BMS Africa Representative Derek Rumbol says: "There is so much insecurity and anarchy. But there is a positive side too. The church is flourishing, really dedicated. One has to admire they way they've gone back and got on with the job."

Sandra Carter is a Christian journalist living in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire.

ABOVE A joyful welcome from the church in **Palanca**

FAR LEFT Margaret meets an old acquaintance at Petro Angola

CENTRE **Margaret and David Grenfell before they** had to leave Angola

BELOW LEFT Piles of rubbish - a common sight in Angola today

PICTURES: Stephen Grenfell and BMS Library

ZM focus ZMXMXMXMXXMXXM

country in focus A Figure 1. The second sec

isted in 1992 as one of the 10 poorest countries in the world by an American Population Crisis Committee, Zaire is not faring significantly better today. According to UN figures 25 per cent of the infant population and 13 per cent of pregnant women in Zaire suffer malnutrition. In March 1995 the UN Human Rights Commission condemned Zaire's government for the systematic use of torture and executions.

Yakombo-Koi
Upoto Lisala
Plmu
REP.
Ntondo
LAKE TUMBA
Bolobo

KINSHASA
Mbanza Ngungu
Kimpese

ANGOLA

ZAMBIA

UPDATE - CONSULTATION FRONT

A consultation between a BMS delegation and 21 delegates of the Baptist Community of the River Zaire (CBFZ) took place in Kinshasa in September at which Operations Director David Martin shared the

BMS vision for mission.

He suggested prayer, evangelism, training of spiritual leaders, medical work – especially in the areas of community health, education, development and administration as areas in which CBFZ and BMS might work together.

The consultation was the follow-up to talks in 1990. The BMS delegation this time comprised David Martin; Derek Rumbol, Africa Regional Representative; David Wilson, President; Owen Clark, BMS missionary and Pat Woolhouse, BMS missionary. CBFZ representatives, included the heads of each CBFZ department and delegates from the Church regions.

EDUCATION

Against the background of the disintegration of the State system it was thought possible to set up pilot schools in each CBFZ area. There was a desire to make education more relevant to local needs by providing trade or technical training rather than focusing on a western academic syllabus.

EVANGELISM

It was recognised that there were certain groups of people largely untouched by the Gospel such as Pygmies and the Bateke, both in Zaire and outside its borders.

WORK IN URBAN AREAS

So far the focus of work has been with

rural populations. But it is estimated that urban centres will grow by 50% before the year 2000 and it is hoped that more work will be done there with street children, prostitutes, drug addicts and criminals.

YOUTH WORK

Positive measures were approved in order that young people could develop their gifts within the church community.

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT

CBFZ is experiencing difficulties in its work because of inadequate communications and transport. Both CBFZ and BMS agreed to look further at various areas implicated. CBFZ would look at the possibility of buying a boat and acquiring further radio-telephone equipment and BMS would reflect further on what contributions it could make in this field, and also the development of satellite communications.

MISSIONARIES

BMS agreed to open the way for missionaries to go to Zaire on the understanding that CBFZ would indicate key areas and types of work where they would be needed. The plan would be for missionaries to train nationals alongside them to take over eventually.

(Material for this supplied by Katherine Jones, BMS Department for Operations)

Zaire One of the 10 poorest nations

UPDATE - AGRICULTURAL/DEVELOPMENT

In June and July 1995 David Stockley, retired BMS missionary and now serving on the BMS/Operation Agri Joint Agricultural Development Committee (known as JADEC) and Pierre Lusadisu Kieka-Nkweno, the CBFZ Development Co-ordinator visited Baptist supported Agricultural Projects in Zaire (funded by Operation Agri through a JADEC grant).

They visited nine projects:

- Tokima Nzala at Ntondo.
- George Grenfell Foundation,
- Youth farm programme, Bolobo.
- Telema, Upper River.
- Lower River Agricultural project at Mbanza Ngungu
- Self-help project at Yakombo-Koi.
- Yakusu Water Project.
- Pygmies at Ntondo
- Project Hope at Lisala (Kinshasa) At a meeting with local people at the Tokima Nzala project (the words mean "Let's flee hunger"), it was unanimously proposed that the farm be worked voluntarily on a points system, where people would be awarded points for the amount of

worth one point. Then the harvest could be claimed in points – 2kg of dried corn or 5kg of manioc being worth one point. Because no cash would be involved, the system

manual work put in – four hours being

would be inflation-proofed.

At Yakombo Koi, where a self-help

project is operating under the leadership of Pastor Gbamo, different activities are carried out including agriculture, carpentry (where tools sent by TWAM are used), blacksmithing, and sewing. These projects are run with no monetary assistance from outside. David Stockley said: "Mr Pierre Lusadisu and I were very impressed... Everyone was involved in the projects; there were no grants from anywhere and people's expectations were from their own resources!! Recommendations - what can you recommend?!"

(Material for this supplied by Katherine Jones, BMS Department for Operations.)

Getting around the projects proved a major logistical challenge, as David relates:

Crossing the river with a Toyota truck was a four hour job! On arrival at the riverside vou "honk" to tell the ferry crew on the other side, to come to work. Then you have to send enough diesel fuel for the engine, and a 12-volt battery to start the engine, by paddle canoe ferry. Across the river, no response! – till the canoe ferry came back to inform us the battery was not strong enough: another battery please! The Toyota engine was opened to take the battery, but not enough spanners. So, the canoe, which because of the current always had to move upstream, did another round trip

with passengers, cycles and luggage, eventually coming back with spanners from the ferry crew. The battery was removed and sent to the ferry crew.

"The silence was awful!! Then - a burst of black smoke - then the sound 'the ferry is alive', and moving. A cheer from the crowd. It passed up river to cross. We got our battery back, so the Toyota could start, and get on board. We paid the ferry fare!! During the crossing, the Toyota turned around on the ferry, as it was easier to get on and off the front end of the ferry.



TOP: The future may be uncertain but the faces of Zairian Christians are a picture of joy.

ABOVE: At last - the ferry crossing

A wet Sunday by Owen Clark

It was the first Sunday in Advent. We had agreed with Evangelist Mputu to visit Ngamanzo, where an embryo church had been recently planted. It was my turn to preach. Deanna would lead communion. The sky was grey with rain-cloud as the service got underway in the open-sided stick shelter with a flimsy roof, overlooking the Zaire river.

The early part went fine, but during the welcomes thunder began to roll in the distance. The sky behind us grew dark. With the offering, the reading and another hymn we were into the sermon, while the thunder got louder and the sky ever darker.

Naturally I had chosen to launch Advent with a word from Isaiah, in fact from chapter 7, where the prophet tries to encourage King Ahaz in Jerusalem not to fear the attacking alliance of Ephraim and Syria. The storm-wind struck from behind just as I quoted the bit about the hearts of the king and people shaking as the trees of the forest shake before the wind. With dust from the dirt floor being blown into their eyes the congregation turned away. Rain began to fall and the roof began to flap. I hesitated but just managed to quote Isaiah's words to Ahaz, "Remain calm and unafraid, do not let your nerve fail...", when my own nerve and that of the congregation collapsed. Gathering our bits and pieces we fled in all directions.

After the storm, with water still dripping and pools on the floor we reassembled in a mud hut with a tin roof, and, after a hymn and a prayer, picked up again at: "Remain calm and unafraid..."

The moral of this little tale is: Don't feel guilty about your fine church building. It's there for a purpose, C H Spurgeon was convinced of the importance of church buildings in promoting the preaching of the gospel and the growth of the church. I hope we can move on to something better at Ngamanzo and elsewhere.



UPDATE - MEDICAL WORK

In August 1995 David Wilson, President of BMS and former missionary in Zaire, and his wife, Sue, also a formermissionary in Zaire, and former BMS Co-ordinator for Wales went back to Zaire to undertake an appraisal of the medical situation. Both have written on their experiences.

ZAIRE REVISITED - A TALE OF TWO HOSPITALS

From 1954 to 1957 I was the doctor at Pimu Hospital, writes David, and from 1957 to 1967 I worked as a member of the medical team at IME Kimpese in the Lower Region of Zaire.

Returning to Pimu after 38 years was an amazing experience. A few of the older people remembered me and others were intrigued that I could speak to them in the Lingombe language. Our journey there had been a nightmare - state employees had not been paid for a year and a half, and consequently roads and bridges were not being maintained. The journey from Upoto, which in 1955 would have taken five hours, took us two and a half days in 1995. The jungle has grown in over the road, pot holes swallowed up the landrover's wheels and wooden bridges had to be checked and reconstructed before crossing them.

In stark contrast to the collapse of

the country's infrastructure the Pimu Hospital has been rebuilt. When I first went there the wards were made of mud bricks. There was a men's ward and a women's and children's ward. Now, built in cement blocks, there are new wards for men and for women, and a separate children's ward. There is a maternity unit, and intensive care ward and a separate ward for eye patients. There is also a new pharmacy, new operating theatre and new outpatient clinic. Although this hospital is in the heart of the tropical forest patients come to it from up to 150 miles away. There is also a chain of rural health centres relating to the hospital and at the present time one young Zairian doctor is carrying the whole load of responsibility.

The Institut Médical Evangélique (IME) at Kimpese was opened in 1953 through the initiative of missionary societies from the USA, Sweden and Britain. It is now one of five large Christian hospitals in Zaire which are



medical practice and training.

When I worked there I was responsible for the Orthopaedic department. In 1956 a technician from Roehampton, England had spent three months there, training local craftsmen to make crutches, splints, callipers and artificial legs. Axel Mapeka has been making artificial legs ever since then. Now almost 40 years later he is beginning to talk of someone to replace him when he retires.

In 1967 when I left Kimpese I handed over the responsibilities of being legal representative and director of the hospital to a Zairian colleague, John Mandiangu. John has carried these duties ever since, maintaining a strong Christian ethic in the hospital's work and a fine Christian witness among the staff and patients. There are now 15 Zairian doctors working there, approximately half of them being doctors-in-training. All these doctors are members of the church and several are playing a leading part in the life of the church.

The Kimpese hospital is fortunate that there are two local cement factories and a large sugar plantation in its catchment area, and these companies are able to pay appropriate fees for the treatment of their employees and their families. John Mandiangu told us that only 11 per cent of the hospital's budget comes from abroad.

However, in the interior of the country our hospitals at Bolobo, Ntondo, Pimu, and Yakusu are almost entirely dependent on the BMS for hard currency for the purchase of medicines and equipment. With the

ABOVE: The pharmacy at Nlemvo

RIGHT: Pierre Lusadisu, CBFZ **Development Co**ordinator and Dr Motingia, Central **Medical Co-ordinator,** at the BMS/CBFZ consultation

PICTURES: David Wilson and Derek Rumbol

total collapse of the State medical service these church hospitals are providing an essential and vital contribution to the people's health.

SUE WRITES:

It had been seven years since I had been in Zaire.

Sadness was certainly one of the first emotions. We felt sad that politically things were so unstable, state hospitals were barely functioning, vaccination programmes virtually non-existent, state salaries had been unpaid for 16 months. The education system had crumbled as had other state services. Inflation was rampant and the currency had been changed and devalued several times. I couldn't cope with a bunch of bananas being 3,000 New Zaires, which would have been £3,000 when I first went to Zaire!

In this gloomy situation one would have expected to find people depressed and devastated, but that was so far from the truth, it constantly amazed me. Africans seem to have resilience that we lack here in the comfortable materialistic West.

Joy was the next emotion that we felt; joy that the Church was alive and growing; joy with our brothers and sisters in Christ who are able to walk daily trusting their Lord despite the crumbling situation around them.

I asked myself many times would I still teach if I hadn't been paid, or nurse if I could gain more money gardening or fishing. Yet it was the pastors, teachers, doctors and other church members that challenged us

Facts and figures

Religious allegiances

Roman Catholic 42% Protestant 36% Kimbanguist church 17% Traditional 3% Muslim 1% Jehovah's Witnesses 1% (Figures: Operation World)

Population 42,476,000 (1994)

Children per woman 6.7 (1991)

Health services One doctor for every 13,540 people (1984-89)

Calorie consumption 96% of required intake (1988-90)

Literacy 84% male; 61% female

Communications 2 newspapers, 1 TV set and 97 radio receivers per 1000 people (1991)

Economy
Annual growth: 1.8% (1980-92).
Inflation: 1,000-3,000% annually.
(Figures: A Third World Guide 1995/96)

and moved us often to tears.

It had been 16 years since I had seen Bilepo. We had first met at Ntondo, her home, and a CBFZ mission station on the shores of Lake Tumba. Bilepo was then a young woman wanting to train as a nurse. This she later did at Yakusu Nursing School. Bilepo was a good student, but

it was tough working 600 miles from her home and tribe. Many times she had wanted to return home, but three years later she was able

to do this as a qualified nurse and midwife. I met Bilepo again; she is now the Regional Medical Co-ordinator.

I had hoped with the food shortage I might lose weight in Zaire. Far from this we were fed with true Zairian hospitality. One of the nurses who cooked for us at Yakusu was Kelekele, a good friend of many years standing. We wept with her over her sad story.

Kisangani had changed dramatically since I had lived there. It was now a centre for diamond trading and the cost of living had risen greatly. Many had left work and become caught up in the diamond search. So much of this was sadly also caught up in black magic and witchcraft. We heard terrible stories of people exchanging a member of their family for a large diamond. It was not clear to us whether Kelekele's husband, whom I had known as a fine Christian man, was involved in the diamond trade but we heard how he had become involved with a witch doctor and had been told to leave his wife and family and marry again.

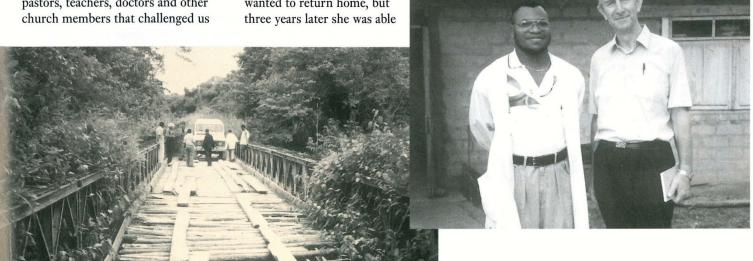
Kelekele conducts the women's choir at Yakusu, and is fully committed to women's work. As she struggles with a family of five she told us how Jesus was her only hope. It's only because she has faith that she can face tomorrow.

It was this kind of faith that we saw throughout Zaire. ●

BELOW LEFT: A bridge on the road from Yakusu to Yauonge — it remains in a poor state because no one is paid to do the repairs

BELOW: David Wilson meets Dr Lobo at Ntondo

PICTURES: David Wilson



Listening and learning

GOING BACK TO BASICS GIVES US A VALUABLE TOOL FOR COMMUNICATING OUR FAITH – LEARNING THE LANGUAGE. BUT THAT'S NOT THE END OF THE STORY, AS DAVID POUNTAIN EXPLAINS

> f course missionaries have to learn other languages. We know that! Don't their first prayer letters start with "namaste", "mbote" or some other word of greeting as they try out their new-found linguistic abilities? We take it for granted that if they are to be effective communicators as Christians in another society then they must learn the language.

> The first months of most missionary careers are spent back at school learning the basics of a new tongue, perhaps, as in Nepal, living with a local family to hear the words spoken in real situations. And the new words have to be tried out, in markets and shops, in homes and in church.

"It's like being a child again, learning to speak for the first time," said one missionary. "You have to be prepared to make mistakes, to use the wrong words in the wrong situations, to use verb tenses incorrectly and to mix up masculine and feminine nouns. You don't have to mind being laughed at or to meet puzzled expressions when people

have no idea what you're trying to say." It's not easy for anyone with a mission, for anyone with an urgent and burning desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ which they believe can change the world, to hold back and assume the role of learner. But do it they must because there is more to it than acquiring a new language.

Language is not just about communicating. It is the tool people use for thinking and for understanding. The whole of a people's history is bound up in language. The phrases that are used are reminders of past speeches, of poetry and of historical events. Strung together in particular ways they can soothe and calm or they can stir people into violent action.

It is not possible to preach effectively or to share the gospel adequately without understanding the culture of a people. The key to culture is the learning of a language but once into it missionaries soon discover that they are receiving far more than they are teaching. Through a language, a people and a culture God offers new insights, new understandings, new meanings to an old faith. God is no longer speaking in English, in British thought forms with all the historical and cultural baggage of our past. He speaks afresh using new words and offering new understandings out of another culture.

There is nothing new in this of course. The Apostle Paul, although born in Tarsus, was brought up in Jerusalem and educated at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). He would have spent his early years in Jerusalem before entering Gamaliel's school at about the age of 15. His childhood would have been within an Aramaic-speaking community and this would have affected him throughout his life.

However, the language which bound together most of the peoples around the Mediterranean was Greek and this was widely spoken even within Palestine. Some of the disciples of Jesus, like Andrew and Philip, had Greek

> names. In fact, in Galilee where Jesus was brought up and began his ministry, Greek towns (Decapolis) and Jewish villages existed side by side, the two cultures rubbing uneasily against each other.

The disciples of the rabbis were educated in Greek culture and we can assume this was true for Paul as a pupil of Gamaliel. Then Paul, after his conversion, spent something like 20 years in a Greek environment continuing to assimilate Greek culture. But more importantly, he began to hear Jesus speaking, not in Aramaic, but in Greek. He had the tools of a new language to develop a theology which had meaning for people beyond the small

nation Judah. This must have been a major factor in the spread of Christianity throughout the ancient world.

In our modern world, where cultures, once separated by mountains and oceans, are constantly coming into contact and even conflict, it is vital that Christians should understand how others think and feel before they even begin to preach. The multi-cultural mix of our modern cities, the cultural and language differences between the generations, the techno-speak of our secular society, all call for Christians to assume the role of learners and listeners. Only then may we begin to hear God speaking through the new cultures and the new languages of our age, bringing the gospel alive for a new generation.

Carol and Angus MacNeill had to assume the listening

Christians should understand how others think and feel before they even begin to preach.



role again when they moved to a new situation in Thailand.

"If you arrive in Sangklaburi on Sunday... come to the Christian hostel at 9.30am and you will be able to share in a Thai service," they wrote in a recent letter. "You might just meet us there, sitting on a mat with the young people. Alternatively, you could go to Eejo's house, where there might be 30 people worshipping in Karen and Burmese at 12 noon. You might just meet us there too, sitting on a mat up against a wall, trying not to fidget too much and refusing to let the word "cramp" enter our thoughts. Eejo will explain things to you in English, if you want... If you wish to attend a more normal kind of Church service, you could go to Huey Malai and worship in either of two fairly

sizeable churches there. Go to one of them and you will meet us there too, sitting on a proper bench this time, listening to the Thai that is being spoken and switching off when the Karen translation begins."

God has much to say to us from other people and through their cultures. Perhaps we should learn to shut up for once and just listen. Then having assumed the role of learners and learned some humility we might become more effective communicators.



David Pountain is Missionary Herald Consulting Editor and minister at Florence Road Baptist Church, Brighton



treo

Ouestions for discussion

- 1 Would crossing cultures be a major deterrent in making you think twice (or three or four times!) about becoming a missionary? Or would it only be a minor deterrent? Or not one at all?
- 2 How would you react to the almost total isolation experienced by Chris and Alison Rudall? (See page 4)
- When you're out of the country, even for a short time (eg on a business trip or on holiday) what do you miss most about living in the UK? What do you not miss at all?
- 4 Would you regard lack of materialism as a compliment? (See Richard and Elisabeth Smith's article, page 6) Or as a sign of eccentricity?
- **5** What do you think is the effect of entering another culture on one's children? How might it a) help, and b) hinder their development?
- 6 How do you think this country has changed in the last five years? Would people who return here after such an absence notice these differences?
- **7** How can our young people be slaves to our culture? (See article Ghana Sex Slaves, page 14)

When little Joel Aston returned to the UK with his parents from Senegal, he had many questions, including, "Why do people hang their plates on the wall?" and "Why do people make their toilets so pretty?"

(Taken from Worldwide, WEC International magazine, Sept/Oct 95)

Breview

GIVE ME THIS MOUNTAIN (THE ROAD TO AFRICA) HE GAVE US A VALLEY (RETURN TO AFRICA) both by HELEN ROSEVEARE published in the CHRISTIAN CLASSICS series by IVP @ £1.99 each

At a time when church libraries (and presumably, readers) are appealing for new and up-to-date books with some street cred, it might seem a little incongruous for a well known publishing house to be re-printing 'Christian classics.'

Having read "Give me this mountain" in my teens, I appreciated re-reading Dr. Roseveare's story, even though some aspects like her early days at Cambridge during the Second World War seem far from reality. This book and its sequel take the reader through Helen Roseveare's call to what was then the Belgian Congo, with descriptions of the medical and other work she was involved in. "Give me this mountain" culminates in the 1964 civil war

in which she was held captive. "He gave us a valley" goes over some of the ground of the earlier book, but with additional details, particularly of the brutality Dr Roseveare suffered at the hands of the rebels through to her return to the UK in 1973.

Even though this story is now 20 -30 years old, its power to declare the

faithfulness of a great God does not diminish with time. For those of

us living cosy Western lives it is good to be reminded of the reality of the gospel lived out in such harsh times.

Jan Kendall



GIRL TALK ACCOURD

Scene: Two girls sitting on a wall in a town. Other people are walking to and fro. Edwina spends most of the time filing her nails. Selina spends most of the time looking in a mirror and adjusting her hair and make-up. They are dressed in the very latest fashion (the more outlandish the better - whatever you can dream up!).

Edwina So, who are you going to send Valentine cards

to then?

Selina I'm making a shortlist at the moment. Trouble is, they're a bit expensive - I mean, the really good ones that say what you are feeling deep down, play tunes when you open them, that

sort of thing. Know what I mean?

Edwina Yeah. It's hard, isn't it. So many difficult

decisions to make.

(butting in) I thought you were going to say, Selina who do you reckon would be sending me a

Valentine card?

Edwina Well, it goes without saying, they'll all be

queuing up.

Selina You know that new family that's moved in down

Edwina Are you trying to change the subject or

sommat?

Selina Yeah, well, I thought we'd exhausted Valentine cards. Anyway, that new family, they're from a

country called Karakanda. Funny name for a country I thought.

Edwina No funnier than Wigan. My family come

from Wigan.

Selina (Ignoring her) The mother, she went shopping,

and do you know what she did?

Edwina No

Selina

Selina She tied to haggle with ol' Henry at the Veg

shop. Imagine that?

Huh. You can talk! I've known you trying to get Edwina

your 30p off bananas at the end of the day!

And the kids! You should see 'em. They look

like they come from another planet.

Edwina (Gives Selina a long penetrating look.)

Selina And do you know - they eat with their hands,

don't use a knife and fork. It's not very hygienic

is it? (Pause) Talking of food, shall we eat now?

OK Where shall we go? Edwina

Selina Have you tried that new DacMonald's?

Finger-licking good, I believe. Let's move then. Edwina

(They both get up. And begin to walk away)

Seriously, though, who do you reckon will be

sending us Valentine cards?

END

BRIEFING FOR FEBRUARY 1996 LANDMINES

effectively with the problem. The anti tank mines are mother when they stumbled upon one of the estimated



Action card for February 1996

Washing carrots, Dalat, Central Vietnam



Asia team

28:19

teams in action!





Trinidad team

Sam Gibson reports on BMS Action Teams around the world

n September 1995, 22 young people embarked on the 28:19 Action Team programme, taking time out to serve God overseas.

Hi! We're Sarah (18), Fo (21), Sarah (18), John (22) and Nigel (18) - in India for three months and then Sri Lanka for a further three months. Calcutta is an incredible city which is constantly awake. The poverty here is like nothing we have ever experienced before. People spend their days in one position begging on dirty, smelly, polluted streets. You can walk straight past them but it's only when you stop to think about the reality and complete injustice of their situation, that Calcutta hits you.

We are working with Emmanuel Ministries and have each chosen a project to work on. Sarah, Sarah and John are teaching at a Pavement Club which provides informal education for street children. One Sunday they had the kids marching down the street singing "Jesus' Love is Very Wonderful". Jo and Nigel are teaching mainly English, maths, art and R.E at a school in a slum area. At first, the language barrier was a problem but after prayer, it has paled into insignificance - praise the Lord! Another thing to give praise for is the discovery of Coke in glass bottles for just 12p - a real bonus!

Things are hectic and our time is so limited; we stayed at a YMCA orphanage in a hostel north of Calcutta for a week, visited a home helping to rehabilitate mentally ill women and

visited various churches and the projects they run. As the daytime temperature plummets to a nippy 20°C, our thoughts turn to Sri Lanka....

Please pray:

- ofor our health
- of for our safety, especially for the girls who cannot go out without male company and are constantly stared at because they are white
- that we be effective in our work as we are here for such a short time
- that God will begin preparing us for the change to Sri Lanka - we are very nervous

Hi! We're Andy (18), Mel (24), Helen (18), Gavin (24) and Hugh (18) - in Albania for six months. We arrived in Albania in one piece and with all our luggage (the first miracle) and are now working in

pairs teaching English to various ages in a suburb of Tirana. Hugh and Andy have started a football team at the Baptist Centre in Tirana and Gavin is giving guitar lessons there. Helen is leading a singing class and Mel an art class, both in the suburbs. We are all involved in the Sunday School and helped with their Christmas preparations - a great privilege as it was only the second time they had done anything for Christmas. We have also begun visiting families which gives us the chance to use our extensive Albanian language skills (ha, ha!).

We have been really blessed with our apartment which has beautiful views over Tirana although the water only comes on three times a day so it's a mad dash for the shower. At least we've got one; from the horror stories we were told before we left Britain we're surprised to even have a toilet! Drinking Raki is an experience, too the army must run their

tanks on it as it's so strong!

Please pray:

- that communication will not prove a problem despite the difficult language
- of or opportunities to share the gospel with our new-found Albanian friends
- for our work
- thank God for our accommodation and good health - pray it may continue

Hi! We're Daryl (22), Angela (22), Anna (18) and David (22) - in Trinidad for six months. After an initial settling in period, we are beginning to tour different churches encouraging young people and teaching in Baptist schools. Anna and Angela are also teaching three sisters, Marissa (8), Maria (6) and Miranda (5) who are in desperate need of remedial education.

The girls are staying with Revd Brian Skinner and his family (President of the BU of Trinidad and Tobago) in great accommodation in Chaguanas. The boys however are in an old people's home in Port of Spain where the lights and radio come on automatically at 4am! It's a bit depressing but we hope to be moving to alternative accommodation nearer the girls at some point. The tans are coming along quite nicely but we still can't pass for locals - we stand out like snow in the Caribbean!"

Please pray:

- for suitable accommodation for the boys
- for safety, particularly for the girls who are harassed on the streets by locals
- for Marissa, Maria and Miranda, that they be able to attend remedial education classes
- for our spiritual lives, that we would trust God day by day

Hi! We're Paul (18), Richard (18), Emma (18) and Anna (18) - in Bordeaux for six months.



Bordeaux team, France

After an enthusiastic welcome by the church we began helping to promote evangelistic events, singing and playing music in Sunday services and participating in a monthly English service. We have found some attitudes here are different from home however and one in particular has proved to be a hindrance to our work. French people do not have much confidence in people of our age and some of the tasks we have been given to do appear very menial to us. We need to show people we can be responsible and to develop patience and accept that not all our work here will be as challenging as we had anticipated.

There is a large amount of occultism in France which has at times mingled with Catholicism - sects abound too. This produces many confused beliefs about God. One way in which we are attempting to counter this in the church, is to set up a Bible study for the youth. There is no opportunity here for the youth to meet together to read and discuss the Bible and God - many people are dubious in accepting the youth (aged 16 to 25) are ready for a Bible study group.

Please pray:

- that our French will improve and not form a stumbling block to our work
- that we show the church we are responsible despite our youth and that we would be patient and find peace about the situation
- for the youth Bible study
 that there be no opposition from the church and that the youth have the confidence to begin organising and taking Bible studies for themselves
- for protection there is much occultism here and we have at times felt under spiritual attack

Hi! We're Oliver (18), Barney (18), Maggie (21) and David (18) - in Morsang near Paris for six months.



No sooner had we set our bags down in the church when we were whisked off to the regional Baptist Youth Congress in Orly - a chance to experience praise and worship on a larger scale with French people our own age.

When we returned we began going into a local secondary school to take **English conversation** lessons with sixth form girls (the lads now believe that serving the Lord has its definite perks!) and we are also taking music workshops with primary school children explaining about our instruments and how they work. Practical work involves decorating the Sunday School rooms, running a stall in the weekly market and helping to publicise evangelistic events, especially those held over Christmas.

Please pray:

- for our communication skills - there has been some definite improvement
- of for a spiritual revival in Morsang
- of for openings to express the gospel in the schools and to people in the market

prayerfocus

A regular update from our missionaries around the world compiled by **Sam Gibson**



SRI LANKA

Fighting continued over Christmas between the government forces and the separatist Tamil Tigers, particularly in the north around Jaffna. Strict security checks slowed up all activities in other areas but life continued more or less as normal for the Lees near Colombo. The Tigers evacuated civilians from Iaffna in November before the town finally fell to government forces in December. Over 20,000 people were moved south but many thousands remained in the area without shelter in the monsoon rains. Aid agencies were reported to be helping with essentials, but the killing went on.

Please pray:

- for the continued safety of George and Betsy when they return in May.
- that the Tigers be prepared to compromise on their stand for a separate state so that a settlement becomes possible
- for peace around Jaffna

so the refugees may return

for the work of the aid agencies in the north



BANGLADESH

Due to disturbances, elections due to be held in January have been moved back to this month. The country remains unsettled with tense strikes sometimes erupting into violence.

Please pray:

- for peace to allow the elections to take place
- for the Lord's outcome to the elections

Europe



ALBANIA

The church in Tirana continues to grow. Last year thirty three new believers



Mark and Claire Ord

The Ords accepted an invitation in August 1995 from the Italian Baptist Union to continue their training in Genoa, at least for the next 18 months. They were assigned to the two Baptist churches in Genoa but are mostly involved with the larger Central Baptist church. Mark was worried that the pastor, two years past retirement age, had finally cracked when at a members' meeting, he thought he heard him repeating the phrase "our church is an elephant". Mark had misunderstood however, the pastor was describing the church building as elephantine whilst complaining about the size of the building being a drain on resources!

Please pray

- for the Central Baptist church facing increasing maintenance costs with a smaller congregation
- the pastors of both Baptist churches retire this summer and they are unlikely to be replaced immediately
- for Mark and Claire's work with these churches as they face difficult times ahead
- for their language study

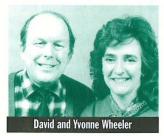
baptised in the sea in July were welcomed into membership in November and the congregation moved into a new church building seating 300 people. The new place is a cinema which shows some rather dubious films, but the staff have been helpful and promised to attend the meetings. The police also became interested, going out of

their way to ensure the forecourt was cleared of cars and trouble makers. Albanian Christians are now taking on much more responsibility in the life of the church.

Please pray:

- for the training and equipping of Albanian church leaders - they are all new Christians
- for a permanent building

- for a permanent building for the Tirana church
- for wisdom for Betsy and Saverio as they take on this support role
- that the presence of the church would sanctify the building so that it would not be a church in a cinema but a cinema in a church





Prema Tennekoon

Prema is developing and implementing a nursing curriculum and training programme in Vlora. Many of the people she comes into contact with - including university staff, students, patients and relatives are all searching for the truth. Change for many is difficult however, especially for the old who have only known life under communist dictatorship. Trust and

delegation of responsibilty are new concepts to be learned and many are concerned about the result of elections to be held next month.

Seventy new students started at the Faculty of Nursing in October 1995. Most of the students and staff are keen to change oldfashioned methods of teaching but there is a long way to go due to lack of facilities. Even when helpful books and other materials are available, they disappear which is frustrating.

Please pray:

- that those searching for the truth will look to God and find it
- that next month's elections be led by God
- for a time of justice when the basic needs of all Albanians are met
- that truth, honesty and responsibility be exercised in the nursing faculty

Americas

BRAZIL

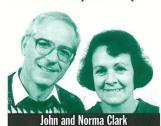
The water board in Genibau ordered all water being pirated to be cut off in six or seven streets in order to lay mains pipes. They did a deal with the community to charge them only a third of the installation costs if they dug the holes. The streets were filled with people

digging trenches for three days who then had to pay half a month's salary for the installation! This sight proves that the future development of the country lies in the hands of its people and shows the importance of forming a cooperative between Western help and the people of Brazil.



Please pray:

of for Jair, Joao, Edson, Moises, Eliene and Aldenir six Brazilian Christian friends who have proved themselves reliable in looking after the work at the church on odd days when Mark and Suzana are away. Pray for wisdom for these young people as they take on further responsibility.



Hope Baptist Church in Fortaleza is growing not only in numbers but in spiritual strength and as a community of love. A family lost the house they had been renting for twenty years and were virtually living on the street. The church agreed to help them buy a piece of land and to start them off with a one roomed construction they could add to later. Luiza and Eliezer moved in before Christmas with tears of thanks.

Denise, wife of the secretary to the Evangelical Council was diagnosed with bone cancer and the church helped out from time to time with medical bills. As well as this and unbeknown to others, ladies from the church had also been visiting her virtually daily taking food or medicines and offering to help in the house. The Lord loves these secret acts of caring and service and John was humbled by the example of his own members.

Please pray:

- that Hope Baptist Church continue to grow and mature in the Lord
- that this grass roots love and care be a visible witness to people around of God's love for the world
- for a piece of land or building and the resources to start a new church in an area where a home Bible study group has outgrown its home

Please send me

How is John Chapter 4 connected with a slum called the Valley Of Blessing, a boy in a wheel chair and a woman looking for milk?

The answer can be found in the first edition of Worldwide Master Tracks in which Stuart Christine a BMS missionary illustrates how the Gospel is changing lives in the slums of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Master tracks is designed to build into an audio library of one off sermons, bible studies, and addresses by prominent and gifted speakers on mission. Listen to them at home, in the car or with friends. Each tape costs £2.50 and is approximately 40 minutes in length. Can you afford to miss this series?

Tracks I have enclosed a cheque for
£ made payable to the
Baptist Missionary Society.
Name
Address

Post Code

copies of Master

nepal



ZIMBABWE

The rains have come late to Zimbabwe and drought affects most parts of the country. There must be heavy and continual rain for some time in order to replenish the exhausted water stocks and as such, the drought may continue for some time. Government feeding schemes were struggling to meet demand at the beginning of the drought and Steve and Pam were caught up in trying to assist drought victims. The permaculture training and drought mitigation programmes do not help when the rain simply does not come and next year's development-related projects and training are at risk of being put on hold if the country's water resources are not replaced quickly.

Please pray:

- for enough rain
- that Steve's work will not be put on hold
- the churches want the Seymour's to extend their work for another year but their permit reads 'nonrenewable' - pray God will clear the way if He wants them to stay

Asia



NEPAL

Sue has taken on a short term project with the International Nepal Fellowship's Hospital Assistance Project (HAP). She is to research and write a proposal for HAP's input into Nepal's Safe Motherhood programme.

The aim of the Safe Motherhood programme is to reduce the number of pregnancy and child-birth related deaths by half by the year 2000. Ninety nine per cent of maternal deaths occur in developing countries and Nepal has one of the highest rates in the world. Most of these deaths are preventable. The official rate for Nepal is 850 deaths in 100,000 live births. In the more remote areas however, figures of 1,500 in 100,000 have been suggested. This is compared to eight in 100,000 in the UK.

In Nepal, 90 per cent of people live in rural areas and most have no roads allowing quick access to hospital when complications arise. Only seven per cent of these women give birth attended by trained health personnel and one of the problems facing the implementation of the Safe Motherhood programme is the serious lack of emergency obstetric facilities in the country.

One of the main aims of HAP is to help the government implement the Safe Motherhood programme. This will not only include operative facilities but could include staff training, regular drug supply, initiating a system of community transport and setting up antenatal and family planning services. The proposal Sue is to write will suggest what interventions could be appropriate in the various HAP programmes.

In January, Sue visited the Myagdi District Hospital programme in Benj where she assessed the project from a midwifery perspective, helped to set up an antenatal /family planning clinic and was involved in some staff training. The team of five expatriates there who give medical and nursing input have been hoping for a midwife to join the team. As vet there is no one in the pipeline is God calling you?

Sue returns to Britain in March for her home assignment. She has applied to go to All Nations Christian College from September and has no imminent plans to return to Nepal.

Please pray

- For Sue's work on the proposal
- For a midwife to join the team at Myagdi District Hospital.
- Pray for Sue as she prepares to leave her church and friends in Nepal and settle back to life in Britain. Pray for clear direction in her life.

Americas



BRAZIL

At the end of last year, Lee completed his teaching year at the Dourados Baptist Seminary in southern Brazil. He and Evelyn have now accepted the pastorate of a church in the town of Itpora, 18 km from Dourados. The church had reached a low ebb and was unable to support a pastor.

The Seminary has been coming to terms with a shooting in which a

student, Paulo, was killed and his wife, Annie beaten up in the presence of their 15-month-old child. The assailant, another student, had been suspended from the seminary a fortnight previously and given thirty days to leave seminary accommodation. He is said to have started an argument with Paulo in his flat before shooting him three times. A neighbouring student rescued Annie and her child before the assailant made off in his car.

It has been difficult for the Messeders and everyone at the seminary to work out how such a thing could have happened. A commission is looking into the events although it is difficult to see how the incident could have been avoided.

Please pray

- For those at the seminary as they begin to find the way forward from this tragedy
- For Annie and her child that they can put these horrific events behind them and begin a new life. Pray also for Annie's financial situation as a widow
- For the Messeders as they take up their pastorate

CORRECTIONS

In last month's Prayer Focus proofing corrections which were not made resulted in errors, for which we apologise.

The heading Africa, over the information about Roger and Nikki Pearce, should have read Europe.

The sub-heading El Salvador underneath the picture of John and Lesley Moody should have read Brazil, and Lesley's name should have been spelled consistently throughout.

A picture of Jill and Philip Igoe was inadvertently used instead of a picture of Jerry and Ruth Clewett, and Paul's name was omitted from the caption to the picture of Paul and Hilary Drinkwater.

Our thanks to those who wrote to let us know about the errors.

africa

The capital of Zaire was thrown into shock when an aircraft on take-off from Ndolo airfield on January 8 failed to make it into the air and crashed on to the Type Ka market killing more than 300 and injuring hundreds more market shoppers.

Reports from Steve and Elizabeth Allford say it put tremendous strain on Kinshasa's medical resources, and an appeal went out for sutures, plasters and blood. However, people were said to be reluctant to give blood because of the danger of HIV infection and fears that the blood would be sold and not used for the air crash victims.

Although the disaster happened weeks ago, the results and memories will be with the people for years to come. The market is a favourite with women of the Baptist church (CBFZ), so Steve and Elizabeth, and Owen and Deanna Clark, will no doubt come into contact with relatives of the dead and injured, and also encounter the anger at the lack of control on aircraft maintenance and the state of medical services. The BMS Relief Fund has made a grant to enable the CBFZ to help the victims and their families.

Please pray:

- for the church (CBFZ) as they offer comfort and support to the bereaved.
- for the relatives of the dead and injured as they come to terms with the shock and loss in a life of continuing uncertainties.

FEBRUARY 1996

George and Betsy Lee from Sri Lanka Mark and Andrea Hotchkin from **Guinea Conakry** Bob and Ruth Ellett from Nepal

DEPARTURES

Philip and Jill Igoe to Zimbabwe John and Lesley Moody to Brazil Tim and Rosimar Deller to Brazil John and Maria Dyer to Brazil Katie Norris to Nepal

OVERSEAS VISITS

Reg Harvey to Bratislava, Czechoslavakia **David Martin to Thailand** Philip Marsden to Sri Lanka, Thailand, **India and Nepal** Richard Wells to Sri Lanka, Thailand, India and Nepal Andrew North to Brazil **Derek Rumbol to Johannesburg** Steve and Carolyn Green to India and **Thailand** John James to Sri Lanka and Nepal

ANONYMOUS GIFTS

Date range: From 01.09.95 To 31.09.95

Abergele	20.00
Anon	100.00
Boston	100.00
Darlington	50.00
Dover	60.00
GYE 190	119.94
Jersey	3.00
Kennedy	54.00
SW Charitable Giving	14.74

£521.68

1,160.00

LEGACIES

Bailey Mrs Helen

Ferris Miss Hilda Mary	1,000.00
Grieve Mrs Margaret MacDonal	d
	1,324.04
Hunt Miss Mildred Annie	500.00
Lord Miss Dorothy	250.00
Lund Mrs Jean Hutchieson	33.16
Massam Mrs Lilian Irene	1,000.00
Pellowe Mrs Ethel Nancy	150.00
Philpott Miss Margaret Dorothy	500.00
Preston Miss Jessie	5,188.00
Selby Mrs Freda Phyllis	67,004.57
Turnbull Miss Mary	25.29

£78,135.06

Green Wellies

reen wellies and wax jackets. You know the image. There are a lot of them about in our village - green wellies that is - rural south Oxfordshire is that sort of place, horses, Land Rover Discoverys, gallops and half-timbered houses with thatched roofs - real Dick Francis sort of place really.

Why mention this? Well, just recently I was listening to an item on the radio which was analysing the current economic situation (it had been left tuned to Radio 4 by the previous user!) and was describing how the recent cold snap had been good for high street business. The weather was to blame yet again - it had been too mild. The shops were full

what could he say...

of winter stock but no one was buying until the weather changed when, suddenly, woolly jumpers and overcoats were in great demand.

"After all, no one buys a coat until the weather changes," said the interviewer. This reminded me of an incident I heard on a recent visit to Albania. Because of the difficulties of just doing normal everyday things and the problems associated with most aspects of running a home, many of the missionaries there employ Albanians to help in the home.

When one couple were away for a few days their helper decided to do many of the jobs she had seen needed doing around the house but had not had the time to tackle. She cleaned and washed everything in sight. The husband returned first and was proudly shown around a sparkling house. He was very impressed at the end of the tour of inspection and full of compliments for her hard work and initiative. "Oh and one other thing," said the helper, "Those two dirty, sticky old coats you and Mrs X (anonymity for the protection of the image of BMS personnel) wear - I've cleaned and scrubbed them. It took some doing but with a broom, a hose and lots of soap I managed to get all the gunge off them!" Silence! What could he say?

It wasn't her fault, she only had one coat and wore it whenever it got cold. She was no victim of fashion. No

thought of nipping out and buying the new season's latest fashion and in any case who ever heard of smothering a nice green coat in wax?

John Passmore takes a sideways view

John Passmore, the BMS Europe Representative was a missionary in Bangladesh for ten years



WHAT A WASTE OF MISSIONARY EFFORTS

Why should there be so much carnage in countries around the world; especially places in Africa and elsewhere where missionaries endlessly toiled to propagate the gospel.

One laments at the terrible experiences in places like Sierra Leone, Liberia and Rwanda. it is rather depressing to see villages being burnt down with an exodus of people trekking on foot to find safety.

What is responsible for this spate of violence where there seems to be no regard for life and property? What is responsible for this unhealthy desire to acquire power and to arbitrarily laud it over the defenceless and the destitute?

I enjoyed pleasant experiences in places in West Africa where missionaries have laboured relentlessly achieving tremendous results. In Sierra Leone (Segbwema) the Nixon Hospital, which received missionary funding, performed excellent services to the country.

Liberia was famous for the translation work of the Lutheran Bible translators: the Sim's Elwa, which was Africa's best known radio station broadcasting in 44 languages.

Where are these projects now? They have been abandoned due mainly to rebel incursions in the ongoing

wars in these countries. Can you imagine the cost of these projects, the prayers of missionary agencies and the support from donors? All these efforts, what a waste, millions poured down into the drain.

In my view, the call to missionary duties can no longer be preceived as Sola Fidei, it is tantamount to puting one's life on the line. Missionaries have been delibertately targeted, shot, arrested in some circumstances. The missionary field is comparable to growing vegetables on a field laid with land mines – one could be blown apart. Life has to be given in order to restore it.

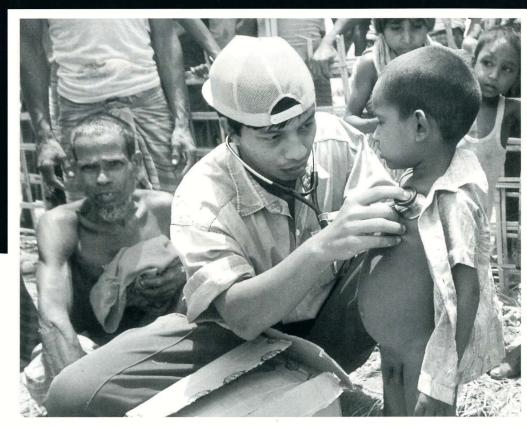
But all is not lost, the faith of the people in these countries does not diminish in the face of these calamities, they cling steadfastly to Jesus. The work of missionaries must be supported. Mission is compelling, challenging and above all rewarding.

The Revd Cornelius Mereweather-Thompson is minister of Harlesden Baptist Church in north west London and is author of the book Christian Dialogue With Living Faith Communities



Helping Where it Matters

BMS Relief Fund



Meeting needs that don't always hit the headlines

	□£ 250	□£50	□£25	□ £10	Other
	Name		***************************************		
	Address				
	*************	**************	3		
Please make cheques payable to					
Baptist Missionary Society. Unless requested, receipts will not	***************************************				

be issued for donations under £10.

Natural disasters, civil wars, refugee crises... they're images we see regularly on TV and in the newspapers. But what about those that don't always hit the headlines? Like making life more bearable for children who survived the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, or supplying medicines to fight measles in Zaire. The BMS Relief Fund is able to respond with compassion and speed to those hit by circumstances beyond their control. What's more, we know we have control over where the money goes and that every pound donated will go to meet those needs, because nothing is deducted by BMS from gifts for administration.

Please will you help us to help where it matters?

BMS Relief Fund





PRAYER FOR ZIMBABWE

O God the great Shepherd

look down upon us

as we struggle with each

passing day.

Carry us one more day.

O God the great Healer

reach down and touch us

as our bodies disintegrate

before our eyes.

Renew us, make us whole today.

O God our great Savious

come down amongst us

as other powers hold us in their gras

Deliver us today

AVAILABLE Now!



Join with Christians in Zimbabwe, Africa, in their vision for church planting and evangelism. Help to raise £36,500 to support BMS work in ZIMBABWE.







The call to mission is a lofty phrase principally associated with service overseas. However, we should not be

lulled into this mindset; we're all gifted and equipped by God in a variety of ways to respond to his call, wherever that may be.

But have you noticed a tendency – probably not intentional – to elevate those who respond to a mission call overseas? It's almost like raising them on a spiritual pedestal. We treat them as extra special.

Our BMS colleagues involved at the sharp end of mission are the last people to consider they're any more special than any one of God's family. They would say they're just ordinary people who felt a stirring of God in their spirits to service overseas and who responded.

The right people in the right place at the right time.

. . . like any one of us whose heart response is obedience to God.

To him we're all extra special.

Richard Wells

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Cover story

(THE CALL: GETTING THE MESSAGE)

BMS colleagues say how they heard God's call..... 4

Steve Chalke

(SUNDAY SCHOOL MYTHS)

Why you don't need "a verse" to get The Call ${f 9}$

News section

(FOREIGN AND HOME NEWS)

Take a look at the world from a global perspective 10

Centre special

STIRRING UP THE TROOPS

The new BMS president goes on tour nationwide 17

Country focus

mb LOOKS AT ZIMBABWE

Mission file

(IDEAS AND OPINIONS)

Facts, figures and background resource material 24

Personal prayer

(WHO AND WHAT TO PRAY FOR)

John Passmore

(MISSIONARY HERALD...)

Waves

(AN INDEPENDENT VIEW)

John Greenshields is this month's guest writer...... 35

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

MISSION KIDS

Parents and children talk honestly about life as a a mission family

FOCUS ON NEPAL

The only Hindu kingdom and the fastest growing Christian church in the world

FRONT COVER: Children of "the untouchables" in the slums of Calcutta to whom the gospel is being taken Picture: Richard Wells

SIMON COLLINS EXPLAINS HOW FROM THE AGE OF 15 HE KNEW GOD WANTED HIM TO BE A MISSIONARY

or me, the call to mission was more a steady process over many years than any single "Damascus road" experience. I grew up in a Christian family, in the days when the BMS still held annual "Summer Schools". Our church's youth group went on these fortnights of fun, Christian teaching and missionary consciousness-raising for several years, and it was at one of these, when I was aged about 15, that I first knew that God wanted me to be a missionary. It was not a dramatic thing – just a certainty in my heart that this was the plan God had for my life. I had recently read a book by Richard Wurmbrand – a Romanian pastor whom the communists imprisoned for many years for his faith, and had been challenged by his assertion that most Christians in the West had "gone soft" - not having experienced real persecution for centuries, they no longer even thought about its possibility, and thus would be less able to stand up to it should it ever descend upon them. His words challenged me,

and I promised God that I would serve Him wherever He called.

At that time, I had no specific career in mind. But next August, back at Summer School, God changed that. There was a talk on "closed countries" – lands that were anti-Christian, where missionaries weren't allowed to preach the gospel openly, and could only enter if they had a specific professional skill to offer. The speaker used an overhead projector to list the sort of jobs that he meant – it included "engineer, agriculturalist, doctor, teacher, accountant, nurse . . ." I distinctly remember looking at the screen and thinking "The only one of

thinking "The only one of those that interests me is 'doctor'. I suppose I'd better become one, then."

And that was the start of my call to medicine – always with the intention of using it to serve God on the mission field.

In due course, God led me to study in Liverpool. Coming from a southern town, I wanted to experience life in a northern city. This

was just after the Toxteth riots, and news coverage of that had awakened a deep desire towards Liverpool. Coupled with the fact that I had supported Liverpool football club since a child, plus the initial stunned reaction of my parents and teachers: "Can't you choose somewhere safer?", it was the natural choice. God confirmed this through the Bible passage I "just happened" to read on the train coming back from my interview - it was Ezekiel 27 - the lament for Tyre – and it struck me how closely this described Liverpool – a once-proud city, its wealth built on the slave trade, but now fallen into ruin.

One direct consequence of my studying in Liverpool was being able to spend my elective in Zaire. At medical school, you get the chance to do an "elective" period of study during your course – two months where you can go anywhere in the world, to see how medicine is practised there. I wanted to go to sub-Saharan, "black" Africa, as by now I was pretty certain that God was preparing me for life there. Again, this was not a dramatic thing, much more a gradual process. Whenever I saw African films, heard



African people,

my spirit lifted

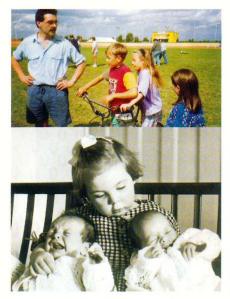
in a way that

mother/child health. During

my university

and junior

doctor years, God had given me the chance to serve on several committees, developing the kind of



when the extent of HIV and AIDS was first being understood in the West. As a result, that year many medical schools refused to allow their students to spend their electives in sub-Saharan Africa. Liverpool was one of the more enlightened ones, realising that AIDS

definitely not made to be a surgeon. And besides, from my reading, I had become convinced that the main health need for Africa today is for primary health care - working with the local community to provide such basics as health education, nutrition, and

"political" skills that I would need.

So there you have it – my call has

God slowly but surely led me along the

Where needed, there have been several

elective in Zaire at Kimpese, in the old

Congo nation. My posting in Angola is

same tribe. One of the souvenirs that I

just across the border - amongst the

brought home from Zaire was a

wooden plaque, proclaiming "Yesu

specific confirmations along the way,

however. For example, I spent my

been very much a gradual process, as

path that is taking me to Angola.

PICTURES Simon Collins: The early years

arranged my trip through a missionary couple I'd met at Summer School some years previously - Steve and Carolyn Green. My medical school thought that the purpose of my elective was to learn more about medicine – I knew it was much more a practical "tasting" of missionary life in Africa, to test my call. And I loved it. I felt very much at home, more certain than ever that this was where God would have me be. I can now see the wisdom of God's leading me to study in Liverpool – my elective was

was a threat that had to be faced, not run away from - and so my "tasting" was able to occur.

In due course, I qualified, and chose to specialise as a GP. Again, this was more a "common sense" thing -

Azali Mokonzi" - "Jesus Is Lord" in in 1988, a time the local Lingala tongue. never any good at DIY or This is the same language that will handicrafts, I be spoken in my part of Angola. So for six years, whenever I sat down to was breakfast, God's affirmation of His call was on the wall above my head. Jesus is Lord indeed! May 1996 Missionary Herald

The waiting years

PHIL AND ROSEMARY HALLIDAY

RECALL HOW THEY SPENT THE TIME BETWEEN THE CALL TO 'GO' AND THEIR ACTUAL DEPARTURE

or Rosemary, the call to mission work came when she first became a Christian as a young teenager. In offering herself to God, she was already conscious that this commitment required a willingness on her part to serve Him anywhere in His world, not just at home. For Phil, the call to work outside of Britain came during a two-week period, shortly before his sixteenth birthday, through a number of encounters with different missionaries and through Bible study. Before our arrival in France, we were both to spend more than twelve years preparing for the work which we believed that God had called us to do and seeing our call tested and focused.

After leaving school, Rosemary trained to be a nurse and then a midwife. She wondered if it would be these skills which would take her abroad. Her home church, Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh, had close ties with a hospital near Nazareth and there were regular requests for

there were regular requests for experienced

nurses/midwives. Before training for the ministry at Spurgeon's, Phil spent a year with Operation Mobilisation in Belgium and then another year doing 'proper work' in Glasgow. The period with O.M. provided an excellent practical training in discipleship and evangelism, but also opened his eyes to the enormous differences in spiritual life between Britain and other parts of continental Europe. While in Glasgow, Phil spent his free time working with an Open Air Campaigners evangelist and this experience too, helped him to test and clarify his call.

They met in 1986, when Phil was invited by Charlotte Chapel to help with some street evangelism during a special week of mission at the time of the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. A month before this, Phil had written to the BMS about the possibility of his working with them. He had put aside the thought of returning to continental Europe for

longer-term ministry, despite an ongoing concern for the needs there, since the BMS had no invitations to send people to this part of the world. However, just at the time of

Phil's letter,

the



French Baptists were in the process of issuing an invitation for the British Baptists to send four ministerial couples to France!

More confirmations followed and then – one wedding, three children and a four-year pastorate later – they moved to France on Boxing Day 1993.

Prayer points:

- For a continuing integration of the various nationalities within Massy Baptist Church.
- For a deeper involvement with a concern for those who live around us.
- For wisdom as to how best to make contact with the community at large.
- For our on-going programme of evangelism.



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ineer



Does God change his mind?

HELEN JOHNSTON WRESTLES WITH THIS PROBLEM

When I arrived back in the UK in December 1994 after two years in Sierra Leone, I expected to return after my home assignment. But the rebel war escalated and it became clear that a return would not be possible in the near future. The secondment agreement between EBM and BMS was terminated and I was left in some confusion and doubt.

Leaving a country precipitously, or being unable to return because of war or unrest, is not a new missionary experience but it is associated with many emotions and questions. The needs in the country still exist and may be greater than ever before. Where is God? What is He doing? What should I be doing? Does He still want me to work overseas in mission?

I had to review my 'call to mission'; my call to serve God. I had to take time to pray, to listen, to question, to be with God. But it was not as easy as it sounds. Did God change His call? - Yes And No!

I had felt a strong call originally to Africa but I no longer felt that, which was quite difficult to accept in some ways. But He gave me a new concern and love for the people of Nepal, a country about which I did not know very much but to which I feel God wants me to go.

The more I have questioned and prayed about it, the more Nepal is confirmed to me in different ways by different people. At one time, I felt a little bit like Jonah when God wanted him to go to Nineveh but he did not want to go, although our reasons for reluctance were somewhat different.

Throughout this time of uncertainty and doubt, I have felt strong support from BMS, family and friends; individuals and groups praying for me and for guidance, for which I am more grateful than I can say.

Prayer is powerful and necessary. I believe God is still calling me to serve him overseas but in a new situation, a new culture with new challenges and possibilities to share His love.

(to an excited response). We prayed much for guidance and felt God leading us overseas but still had no idea of where and in what capacity.

With this in mind we wrote to the various mission organisations. Our first interview was to be with BMS, a week after our own church had given us its full support at a quarterly meeting. As we drove to Didcot for our 'chat' with Andrew North, we wondered what we could tell him about ourselves. Yes, we are both accountants, but accountants were not needed in mission, were they? We both were heavily involved in our home church, Richmond Road Baptist, Caroline in the children's work and Tim as deacon and treasurer. We were both long-standing members of Cambrensis Choir in South Wales. There must be something we could

offer to the mission field?

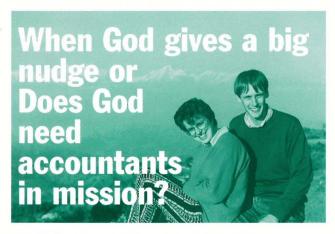
At the end of a relaxed, friendly chat with Andrew, he produced a fax from a brown paper folder, saying, "We have just received this fax from Nepal, the United Mission to Nepal urgently need an accountant; please

think and pray about it."

As we left Baptist House it was as if our blindfold had been removed. Yes, God need accountants in the mission field. Our questions were answered. Two days later another missionary society pointed to the same work in Nepal, confirming to us this specific call.

This was not the end of the process; our call was tested at a second interview, this time with Sian Williams, BMS Director, Dept. for Missionaries and then at BMS Candidate Board. Then after a period of missionary training we arrived in Nepal in July 1995.

For five months we have been working as accountants in Kathmandu but our call is still active as we seek how we can best become involved in the Nepali church.



TIM AND CAROLINE TRIMBLE TELL HOW GOD CALLED THEM TO NEPAL

Come over....and help us." Suddenly, as these words were read from Acts 16, we heard a clear call from God to make ourselves available for mission. Where or when, we didn't know. For a few years previously we had felt God 'nudging us' in a new direction but now the call was unbelievably strong, it felt as if God was giving us a 'kick up the backside'.

That took place in Spring Harvest 1994 at Pwllhwli. On returning home to Cwmbran in South Wales we shared this call with family members (to a mixed response) and with our church

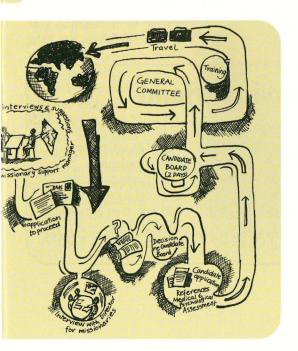


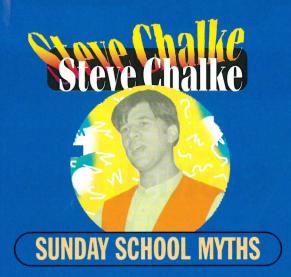
Qualities to be looked for in a Missionary

	A	Adaptability	The chiliby to fit like a glove into present into and daily promises		
P Popular		Regular	The ability to fit like a glove into uncertainty and daily surprises		
C Compassion		Compassion	Borne of depth and understanding		
	U	Compassion	Seeing people through the eyes of God		
	U U	Encourage	Staying the course even when all seems in vain		
	E_{-}	Encourager	Helping other people to grow		
	-	Pattin	To sustain, inspire and transform		
	G	Grace	To forgive and be forgiven		
	· id	Humour	To laugh with others, yourself and God		
		Instinct	The gut reaction by which to respond		
	J	<mark>Joy</mark>	Reflecting a real, down to earth, experience of faith		
	K	Kindness	That profound loving kindness in dealing with those like you and those not like you		
		Language	A willingness to learn one or more languages		
	M	Maverick	'Independent and non conformist'!		
	N	Recognising your own impoverishment of love, understanding and experience			
O Openness		Openness	To receive and learn new things of God and his purposes		
	P	Proclaimer	Of God's reconciling love in Jesus Christ		
	Q	Questioning	Always wanting to know more and dig deeper		
	· R	Radical	A heart discontented with the world as it is and vision for what it could be		
	S	Still	An ability to exude stillness in the midst of chaos		
		Teacher	Who can practise and proclaim the presence of God		
	U	Unusual	A hint of exceptionability		
	y	Vocation	The root of missionary life		
	\overline{W}	Weakness	An appreciation of this will be a strength		
	X	Christ	Looking to Jesus, who showed us how it should be done		
	Y	Yes	The response to God's call, his world and his people		
	72	Zip	That certain sparkle which embraces life in all its glory.		

Last year the BMS received about 350 requests for information about missionary work, 180 of which became "inquirers" who corresponded further with the Missionaries Department. The rigorous selection process, resulting in interviews with the BMS Candidate Board, resulted in the acceptance by the General Committee of eight "offers of service". Currently 180 BMS personnel work in 33 countries, and the most pressing need is for experienced ministers to work in leadership training, pastoral encouragement, church planting and urban ministries.

The road to world mission is a different experience for everyone but it always starts with God's call and a desire to do God's will. It can take a couple of years to arrive at your destination, but with the BMS you can be sure that the process through which you have come will have been a thorough preparation and an encouraging confirmation of God's call on your life.





"God's work is never held back by a lack of finance, only by a lack of vision" - just one of the popular Sunday School myths I was taught as a boy. I've since discovered that it's only people with a lack of vision who believe that one! But the two most damaging and dangerous myths, which caused me and many others so much unnecessary worry and confusion are those to do with "calling".

Myth No. 1: You Must Have A Verse To Do What You Do.

As a child I often met missionaries who, whether they meant to or not, left me with the impression that you couldn't get called to "Christian Service" unless God had specifically given you "a verse". The "verse" was the indisputable, authenticating hallmark of every genuine missionary vocation. No "verse", no call: in my church, it was that simple. (Nowadays, of course, the "verse" has been replaced in many churches by a "prophetic word" about you.)

Myth No. 2: You Must Not Enjoy Doing What You Do.

The reason why every missionary I ever met placed such great store by their "verse", it appeared to me, was that none would actually have chosen to become a missionary without it. Serving Christ was a case of grinning and bearing it, remembering that "whoever endures to the end will be saved". As a teenager I was told if I was really committed to Christ, I'd become a Sunday school teacher, like it or not. (Strangely, you did not seem to need a "verse" to do it!)

These two myths left me with a big problem. From the day I became a Christian at the age of 14, all I ever wanted to do was to be a Baptist minister and spend my life telling people about Jesus. But I just couldn't convince myself that I really didn't want to do this. And however hard I prayed, I never managed to get a "verse". I even resorted to playing Bible Lottery, opening my Bible and reading verses at random in the hope of hitting the jackpot; but the best I got was Hosea 1:2, "Go, take to yourself an adulterous wife." I became depressed, harbouring a guilty fear that my desire to become a preacher was motivated by selfish ambition.

It wasn't until just two or three weeks before starting theological college, at the age of 21, that the truth dawned: God had given me the drive and enthusiasm to become a minister. He wanted me to be set free by serving him, not squeezed into a mould that didn't fit and I wouldn't enjoy it. It was OK to be excited and enthusiastic.

There's no evidence that men like Nehemiah ever had "verses" from God. But there's plenty to suggest that he gave them the necessary skills, drive and enthusiasm for the job. The days of needing a proof-text (or even a "prophetic word") to validate a call are over. Look for the obvious signs and don't be afraid to let people see you enjoying your work! Above all, let's think carefully about the signals we send our children, intentional or not.

Steve Chalke is General Director of the Oasis Trust

new

Scottish pastor to head BMS

Baptist minister Dr Alistair Brown has been proposed as the new General Director of the BMS. His nomination follows Reg Harvey's announcement last year that he will retire early.

Alistair (45), for 10 years in leadership at Gerrard Street Baptist Church, Aberdeen, will be recommended to the BMS annual business meeting in May for an initial seven year term of office.

Passion for mission burns deep in his heart and he has encouraged his church in giving so that it now donates 20 per cent of its income to mission and another one per cent to relief work. The church has sent 11 missionaries and every summer up to 50 of the congregation go on mission.

Far from being an armchair mission supporter, Alistair has visited Senegal, Thailand and Pakistan to encourage missionaries from his home church, and as the BMS heads for the 21st century, he is keen to encourage Christians to take bold steps in world

Before entering the ministy in 1975, Alistair was a journalist with The Scotsman. A graduate from Edinburgh in 1974, he also gained a BD (hons)



Revd Dr Alistair Brown: Nomination as the new BMS **General Director**

four years later and a PhD in New Testament studies in 1982.

He began his ministry as student assistant pastor at Craigmillar Baptist Centre, Edinburgh, and in 1979 was appointed part-time pastor at the new Dedridge Church becoming full-time in 1981. His major emphasis was evangelism and during his ministry membership rose from 37 to 150.

He became pastor at Gerrard Street in 1986 and in the following two years, numbers rose so high that the church had to move to a new building. Today the congregation numbers 500 and the church has planted in Sheddocksley, which has a 100-strong membership.

"The church has changed dramatically in the last 10 years," said Alistair. "The breath of God's power has blown through our ranks and changed the lives of individuals and our forms of worship."

He said he was pleased to see the reaffirmation of the evangelical

emphasis of BMS work in recent literature and videos.

In the past six years Alistair has had four books published, has contributed a chapter to another book and his latest, Near Christianity, is due to be published this year by Hodder & Stoughton. Among other responsibilities, he has served on the Executive and Council of the Baptist Union of Scotland, and has been a member of the Scottish Council of Interserve.

Alistair, married to Alison with four children – Alistair (21), Rachel (19), Judith (17) and Catherine (15) – is expected to take over full responsibility on November 1 but will join BMS in September.

In the meantime, he asks for prayer support for wisdom in bringing his present ministry to a close, preparation for what lies ahead and that his family's needs would be met.

"This move will have a major impact on them," he said.

Barnabas . . . your flexible service friend

A new flexible method of volunteer Christian service has been launched by BMS.

The Barnabas Project will meet the needs of overseas partner churches by finding placements for

volunteers of all ages for between three months and a year, whether single people, couples or teams.

Placements will cover a wide range; in fact, says project co-ordinator Andy Wilson, the possibilities

are endless.

"Experience is the key word," he says, "both in offering the experience that you have and in gaining the valuable experience of working in a cross cultural situation."

Andy is excited that Barnabas will provide more people the opportunity to explore and fulfil a desire to serve God with their gifts and experience.

Details: 01235 512077

Legacies rescue the finances

Legacies to the BMS and investment income last year saved the society from having to dip into its reserves to the tune of £318,650 as planned.

A total of £1,015,395 was bequeathed, including a single legacy of £245,000 which came in during the last week of the financial year. This was £365,395 more that the anticipated £650,000.

Investments brought in £99,619 more than expected because the market performed well.

Actual income during the year 1994-95 totalled £4,681,553; the BMS estimated it would receive £4,378,200. But Finance and Administration Director Chris Hutt said that while there was a surplus of £303,353 over the expected income, donations from churches were well below last year's appeal figure.

Finance and

giving..."

Administration

Director Chris Hutt:

churches to increase

"Essential for the

It had been hoped that giving would increase by five per cent over the 1993-94 figure. In fact it rose only 1.3 per cent.

"The BMS financial position was bolstered by investment income and selling investments, and



legacies," he said. "But our rock support from the churches is not growing as much as we hoped. We don't get these legacies every year; we're very vulnerable on legacy income and we don't expect it to grow."

Although total income was up on expectations, spending during 1994-95 was £6,113 below the £4,696,850 budget.However, the BMS still spent more than it received – £4,690,737 against £4,681,553 – a deficit

of £9,184 which will be taken from reserves.

"Because donations from churches were significantly below the appeal figure, we've got further to go this year," said Chris. "So it's essential for churches to increase giving by the sum appealed for. Even if churches reach the target four per cent increase figure, it will still mean a substantial draw on reserves — as high as half a million pounds if other income and expenditure is as anticipated."

But Chris had brighter news; in February this year giving by churches had increased by five per cent.

Martin chosen to wait in the presidential wings

When Carolyn Green takes over from David Wilson in May as president of the BMS, 43-year-old Martin Pearse will step up to the vice-presidency.

Martin, married to Anna with two children – Nicholas (11) and Mark (9) – is the son of BMS missionaries and has had contact with the society over a number of years, attending 18 summer schools.

His father served in



Martin Pearse: New BMS Vice President

India in the 1930s and 1940s and became Associate Foreign Secretary.

Since his election to the BMS General Committee in 1986, Martin has served on six committees and from 1994 has served on the Board of Management as a representative director.

The family attend New Baptist Church, Burton-on-Trent, where Martin is a deacon and chairs its youth working party and premises development committee. He is a member of the East Midlands Baptist Association General Committee.

From 1985 he has been director of the Burton-on-Trent YMCA.

Outside work he is a football referee, barn dance caller and producer in a Christian drama team. Overseas interests involve him in India and Malawi.



Grace 'makes the difference'



Ten year old Grace Slatter, of South Bank Baptist Church, Middlesbrough, swam 72 lengths of her local swimming pool to raise £85 for the BMS Relief Fund. The attendants at the swimming pool cordoned off a lane so Grace would not be interrupted and her grandfather kept account of the lengths while her family cheered her on for the one and a half mile swim.

Well done Grace!

Dates for your diary

If you are organising a world mission event open to visitors, and would like it publicised in this diary, please let us have details at least three months in advance. Drop us a line at: Diary Dates, World Mission Link, BMS, PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA. Alternatively, telephone on 01235 512077.

May and June - Presidential Tour

In May and June Carolyn Green will be in the Southern Church leaders' Presidential Breakfasts by invitation Thursday May 30 at Woodley, Reading Friday May 31 at Thornhill, Southampton Saturday June 1 at Kidlington, Oxfordshire Details: Jim Clarke, 01353 778984

At the Cutting Edge – a celebration Saturday June 29 at Avenue Baptist Church, Southend Details: Jim Clarke, 01353 778984

All these events give an opportunity to hear about BMS in action today - a world mission vision as we approach 2000.

8 May – Wednesday

Annual Women's Missionary Meeting, Caersalem, Caernarfon, 2pm

Details: Mrs Ivy Turner, 01248 681121

18 May - Saturday

Albania comes to Amersham, 28:19 Action Team at Amersham Free Church, Bucks, 4pm.

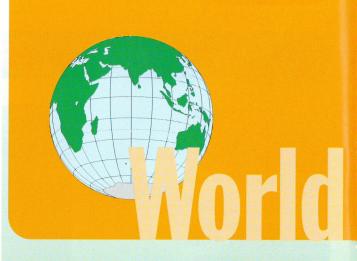
Details: Jim Clarke, 01353 778984

20 May – Monday

East of Scotland WMA Spring Conference at Dunfermline Details: Rena McLachlan, 0131-449 3667

29 June - Saturday

Halliday Holiday Hot Dogs, BMS missionaries at Totteridge Baptist Church, High Wycombe, Bucks, 4pm Details: Carolyn Leonard, 01628 526512



The Big Slurp

Many churches supported The Big Slurp on February 10, a national awareness event to promote fairly traded tea and coffee through a variety of fun activities.

At Scorishbrick New Road Church, Southport,

Margaret Moore was keen to organise something but had already arranged a training course at Ormskirk District

Hospital, where she works. Undaunted, she decided to combine the two. The result was a "slurp" in the hospital physiotherapy department with the 15 course participants. Margaret says: "We certainly slurped a lot of Clipper tea and Café Direct coffee but more importantly, awareness was raised of the issues involved. Everyone was interested in the projects BMS described and will certainly look for fair trade labels in the future."

Harrow Baptist Church made it into their local press, the Harrow Observer. with their free tea and coffee tasting session at the church in the town centre

This was supported by a trip around the corner to



the shopping precinct with two full vacuum flasks. Hot drinks were handed out to passers-by with leaflets explaining what church members were doing. Despite competition on the streets from charity collectors, market traders and suspicion from people not used to getting something for nothing, the day was a success and everyone involved enjoyed the experience. They even made a profit from the sale of home-made cakes and a donation box

Inspiration, motivation, ideas, news on world mission for churches...

Mission Link

Big Slurp Day in Wigan coincided with the Wigan Baptist Church bicentenary celebrations and a BMS You Can Make a Difference weekend so Astley Bridge, Atherton, Bolton Central, Leigh and Golbourne churches joined together in an evening of fun and fellowship based on our response to the needs of the world.

A Traidcraft stall sold brands of fairly traded tea, coffee and chocolate and the evening rounded off with a 'slurp' and scones (pictured) with worship and prayer for the world.

'One in a Million' is evangelism at the front end

If you're over 18 and would like to be involved in evangelism at Notting Hill Carnival in August, look no further than One

in a Million. Last year's event, hosted by

Westbourne Park Baptist Church, involved a team

> people from various parts of the country doing theatre, puppetry, music and a steel band. Paul Jackson. minister of Westbourne Park said.

> > "You have

to see it to

believe it. Right through the two days of

the carnival hundreds upon hundreds of people came into our church – people who would never normally go near one."

a Viz-A-Viz project

with Westbourne Park

Baptist Church

For further details contact: Phil Hobern, Viz-A-Viz, 227 Rayleigh Road, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex, CM13 1PJ or telephone (01277) 215222.



Q. We are a small church but we're developing an interest in BMS. We've got hold of the BMS's Around the Dear Audrey... World in 132 Ways and it mentions a BMS Prayer Guide, which we think it would be good to have. Are there still A. There are a few left at £1 each; just let us know how many you would like. We do send a pulpit copy of the copies available?

Prayer Guide to every church at the beginning of the year. If you can't find yours, it might be worth asking your Minister/Leader where it's got to!

Q. I'm sure I should know this but I've just moved to this area and no-one seems to know what is happening about From a harassed minister ... Link-Up as our last missionary no longer works for BMS. A. I'm sorry you're confused. When a missionary comes to the end of their service with BMS we end the Link-Up and ask the group to discuss a new Link-Up. Your Link-Up group contact hasn't yet replied. I'm sure it would move things along if your church got in touch with your Link-Up group contact and you might even like to offer



NEWS IN BRIEF

VIETNAM: Three American missionaries had their passports confiscated and were detained for four days by police after the break-up of an underground church meeting in Ho Chi Minh City. Vietnamese law allows freedom of religion and some denominations are officially recognised but a growing number of Christians belong to underground churches who meet in small groups without a licence. The three were each fined US\$50.

FIJI: The 1,000 ton YWAM medical ship Island Mercy, part of the international Mercy Ships fleet which twins practical health care with evangelism in developing countries, is planning to visit the tiny island of Yasawa in Fiji following an unusual invitation. A bottle containing a leaflet describing the work of the ship was tossed overboard in July 1994. Nearly a year later it was washed up 700 miles away on a Yasawa beach where it was found by a member of a local church.

AMERICA: A small team at the Bethany World Prayer Centre, USA, is compiling short reports on the lives of the 1,685 people groups who have yet to hear the gospel. Organisers hope the reports will be used by thousands of prayer groups around the world leading to a gospel breakthough. The project is part of the AD 2000 and Beyond movement which co-ordinates missionary efforts among unreached people.

BULGARIA: The Bulgarian Evangelical Alliance (BEA) has sent an urgent plea for help following a campaign in the country against sects. The BEA spoke of opposition and animosity against evangelical churches which, it says, the media treat intentionally as sects. Some recognised evangelical denominations have existed in Bulgaria for more than 100 years but now many local authorities are refusing to allow the construction of churches and evangelical gatherings in public places.

Tension after bomb



Following the headline-hitting bomb blast at the central bank in Colombo in February the situation in Sri Lanka is still unstable.

There have been reports of explosions in many cities, including the capital Colombo, and fighting is continuing with Tamil rebels.

The February bomb killed and wounded several friends and relatives of FARMS, a Christian non-profit making organisation concerned with family development. JADEC, the joint BMS and Operation Agri committee, has recently made a grant to further its ministry.

● ABOVE: Behind two armed police guards lies the ruin of Colombo central bank in which more than 100 died. Picture - Richard Wells

Young Baptists mobilised in Zaire

The Zaire capital of Kinshasa welcomed around 250 young Baptists from three major national Baptist communities for the third Zairian Baptist Youth Congress.

The five-yearly congress, under the title of Risk All For Christ, our only hope, challenged young people to set Baptist values over and against various religious influences from all over the world, to fight against social injustice and to move heaven and earth to reconstruct their broken society.

Relief Fund grant will help clear u

A BMS grant of £2,000 has been made to help with the post-flood rehabilitation programme in Bangladesh. The severest floods hit the north three times between



last July and September. A flash flood also affected Rangpur, Dinajpur, Gaibanda, Bogra, and Thakurgaon districts destroying 40,000 houses and many crops.

> Families were left homeless without drinking water or food. This in turn led to diseases such as diarrhoea and dysentery. The grant will help in rebuilding houses for 1,000 families, distributing 30 pumps for irrigation and domestic use, and in the

Church grows amid economic gloom

Against a poor economic climate in the new Republic of Georgia (a state of the former USSR), the Baptist church has grown from 2,000 to 4,500 members in six years. In the same time the number of congregations has multiplied more than threefold from 13 to 42 and there is a fledgling seminary with 70 students in the capital of Tbilisi.

Georgia has no fuel for heating, little electricity and 80 per cent unemployment. State-funded orphanages and hospitals have been closed down, many employees have gone without wages for months and parliament shut down until the spring due to lack of funding.

But Pastor Akhalmosulishvili, a surgeon in Tbilisi, believes the economic duress provides an opportunity for the church to witness through social and medical programmes and he has joined 20 doctors and 30 nurses, many unemployed, to establish church-sponsored clinics.

There are plans for new agricultural co-operatives and an oil press donated by Baptist women of Great Britain should bring in badly needed income for Baptist farmers. Medical equipment for clinics and furniture for the seminary will be shipped to Georgia from US Army surplus stockpiles bought by the Baptist Federation of Germany.

First birthday for Tirana church

Tirana Baptist church celebrated its first anniversary in February. From a congregation of 42 which met in a large room, the church now worships in a 200-seat cinema. Membership is 96 and another 17 are to be baptised.

A music group has been formed and young people have begun to lead worship. Every week there are eight Sunday School classes for all ages. Christians in Tirana are excited as they see God changing lives, new Christians growing and others displaying leadership qualities. They ask for prayer as the church develops, particularly for a building.

after the big floods



distribution of 100 sets of slab latrines. The BMS Relief Fund grant was matched by the Liebenzeller Mission International, Bangladesh Baptist Sanga's other overseas partner.

ABOVE: The most effective way to get around in flooded **LEFT: Business as usual** despite the flood

UPDATE

Vision for improvement

Sally Murcutt from CVG TV visits the Baptist Sangha School for Blind Girls in Dhaka

Over the years I have been privileged to film around the world for many different Christian organisations. In January I visited Dhaka, Bangladesh, to make the Christmas Cracker video for Christmas 1996, in conjunction with Sight Savers International, showing their progressive eyecare work in the villages.

I visited the BMS-supported Baptist Sangha School for Blind Girls in Dhaka, with an open mind, because you can never be quite sure of what to expect. From the moment I met Mrs Manju Samaddar, the principal, I was impressed. She certainly knows what she is doing and where she wants to go. The vision she has for the school is tremendous and she is determined against all odds to improve the quality of life for blind girls in her country.

It is tragic to hear of the many children going blind needlessly through malnutrition or preventable childhood diseases, such as measles. Many, especially

the girls, are just cast aside by their families. This is why the school is so vital and there is no other school like it in the country.

It was heartening to see such a well run and disciplined place where it was obvious the staff cared and showed such loving kindness in the way they spoke to and taught the girls.

By the time we left we were in total agreement that the school should be featured in the next

Cracker video with Steve Chalke. The girls had all made a real effort and looked smart and pretty with ribbons in their hair. We filmed them outside doing PT, which helps them with co-ordination and mobility. We filmed them in a music lesson and saw them learning English from Braille text books. Steve Chalke had a go but he wasn't very good!

We followed the girls on a shopping spree, designed to teach them mobility and to increase their confidence. We blind folded Steve and sent him off with them, and he did pretty well.

I cannot emphasise enough the tremendous work of this school. It is so encouraging to see a work started by a missionary now being run by a national that is not just surviving, but growing from strength to strength with 100 full-time students, aged five to 18, doing work up to GCSE standard. Some have later gained degrees

 Watch out for the new Christmas Cracker video, Blind Truth.



On location at **Dhaka: Sally Murcutt with** the Cracker film crew at the school for blind girls



PICTURED: Informal breaks between talks sessions during the September consultation between BMS and CBFZ in **Kinshasa**

The BMS has renewed its partnership with Baptists in Zaire. A further five year term has been agreed following a consultation last year with the Baptist Community of the River Zaire (CBFZ). Zaire is a traditional BMS mission field with a history dating from the 1870s, when BMS missionaries George Grenfell and Thomas Comber accepted the challenge and moved from the Cameroons to what was then known as the Congo, following the gift of f,1,000 from Leeds Baptist Thomas Arthington to establish a mission on the Congo river.

Today, Zaire is a country in a state of disintegration, but the church is positive, says Africa Representative Derek Rumbol.

"Younger members have great enthusiasm for getting on and doing it themselves," he said. "The church is



New era for Zaire church

willing to move forward and is thinking of the future."

While the BMS and the CBFZ have agreed to new ventures to take the gospel to all people groups, they are keen to encourage the financial independence of churches in Zaire.

The BMS aims to reduce its financial support for church administration to zero in five equal yearly steps of £2,000 starting next year. However, said Operations Director David Martin, this may be offset by grants for special projects and other ministries.

"This may be one small step in budgetry planning but it's a giant leap for cutting the dependency culture," he said. "It's an incentive to them to face a challenge and respond."

He stressed the BMS would not leave the CBFZ in the lurch if the going got tough. The situation would be monitored and adjustments made if necessary.

During the next five vears the BMS and CBFZ partnership will cover:

Medical work improvements.

- A plan of action for development work.
- A plan for evangelism and the necessary language training to make it happen
- A focus on Christian education to include

training centres, Christian literature production, travel scholarships and theological education.

- A youth work package involving spiritual and intellectual enrichment.
- Support for educational development.
- Promotion of personnel, leadership and theological training.
 - Work in urban centres.
- A strategy for radiotelephone and satellite communications.
- A management plan for transport.
- A policy of financial independence and income generation.



Christine Neilson — Off the shelf

More than 600 churches are now using BMS News, the monthly A5 insert for church magaznes and newsletters.

It's free and comes in photocopiable artwork form and contains news of mission activities from around the world.

Check to see if it's in your church magazine.

The popular Praying

With Missionaries poster has been revised and is available free of charge.

And if you haven't yet bought your copy of the Network BMS video, You Can Make the Difference, please hurry because we're running out.

It makes challenging and interesting viewing, and comes with a free workbook for further study. And it's only £7.95.

Hot off the press is the BMS Project 96, which focuses on Zimbabwe and the movement of God's Spirit there. A project book, poster and bookmarks are available to those who want to help raise money to enable Christians there spread the gospel.

Audio visual resources will be available later.

Violet Corlett

Violet Corlett, former BMS missionary in India, died on February 2, a month before her 90th birthday. Her health and quality of life had recently deteriorated. She was the widow of W A Corlett and they served in India from 1946 to 1969. Violet had been in the **Cheverel Nursing** Home, Worthing for several years. She was well known to members at Carey Baptist Church, Calcutta, who held a memorial service.



PROFILE BY SANDRA CARTER

atch out for a new look BMS when Carolyn Green becomes president in April. Asked what she'll bring to the job, she says mischievously: "Fashion sense. A bit of class. Sense of humour."

What she doesn't mention is her wealth of experience from 13 years as a missionary, a clear vision of what mission is all about, and a passion to share her enthusiasm with others. Add to this a no-punches-pulled approach to communication, and it begins to look like an interesting year ahead for the BMS.

At 45, she is younger than the average BMS president. This too makes her laugh: "I've been referred to as the youth vote. It's a sad day when a grey-haired woman of 45 is the youth vote!" But there's nothing frivolous about Carolyn when she talks about mission and her role as president.

"We've been looking for a fresh approach to making the work of God through BMS known in the churches. The God we serve and whose love we share doesn't change. But even our supporters have got used to BMS."

During the year she hopes to speak to every Baptist minister in England, Scotland and Wales - "encourage them to put world mission on their agenda". Breakfast or lunch meetings will be held in centres throughout the land, as well as celebrations in some areas. So what will be her message?

"I'll tell them what the BMS is doing NOW, not what they thought we were doing 20 years ago.

"I'll be reminding them that mission is God's priority, otherwise he wouldn't have bothered with Jesus. Whether they engage in mission at home or overseas is up to them. The pastor is either the stopper in the bottle, or the catalyst

for the whole congregation."

(a) the cutting ed

Carolyn already has a good idea of attitudes in the pulpit. In 1994 she conducted research for the BMS, speaking to nearly 200 pastors, a tenth of the total. She says: "Around 82% described themselves as evangelical or evangelical/charismatic. They tended to support relief agencies rather than missions, and many said they felt the BMS wasn't evangelical enough.

"I don't believe that is a true perception. The vast majority of those involved in the BMS could be said to be evangelical, though people may not like the label. But salvation by faith with works following - that's

evangelical, and that's what we're preaching."

As she travels the country, she knows she must face the barrier of being a woman before some will listen to her message. "It's essential that women minister in

> the church. Of course if there weren't so many

wimpy men the women wouldn't have to do it! But I hope they don't think I'll be a feminist leader. I'm not a feminist in the usual sense. I'm me.

"As a married woman I believe I chose to be with my husband and Steve is head of our family. We make decisions together but Steve will present those decisions, and carry the can. Steve has released me to do this work. I couldn't do it without his 110% support."

Steve says: "I spent years being the one up-front while Carolyn played the supporting role with the children and home. She has a lot of gifts that need to be used now and I'm happy to support her in doing it."

Carolyn adds: "I have the support of our two sons too,

continues on page 18



Carolyn Green

Cutting Edge

continued from page 17

which is just as important." Andrew, (22), is taking a year out from his university course, teaching in Moscow with the British Council. Barney, (19), is on a BMS youth team in Paris before starting medical training.

As Steve and Carolyn talk it's clear they are a couple who communicate easily and freely, sparking off one another's ideas, supporting and stimulating one another. By appointing one to BMS office, you're going to get the wisdom

Their 13 years with the BMS gave them invaluable insight into overseas missions. Steve was a hospital paediatrician in Zaire. Carolyn, a science teacher, taught at a church secondary school and a nursing school, and then found herself running the guest house linked to the Christian hospital: "We had everyone from ambassadors to gun-toting extortionists and presidents in exile. Often our home was an extension of the guest house."

She also gave their sons home schooling until they went off to boarding school.

As Carolyn tours Britain she won't be spreading a blinkered message that overseas mission is all that matters. The important thing for Christians is to catch God's heart and be obedient wherever he leads.

She says: "Missionary life? It's great fun. How can you possibly be anywhere better than where God wants you to be - whether that's home or overseas."

Steve adds: "Sometimes we meet people who missed it for fear of what they might suffer. Obedience is what God is after, not suffering. Okay there are blue moments whether overseas or home when everything seems to be going wrong. I remember one such time in Zaire when God

clearly said, 'I asked you to come here, the results are mine.' That's the issue for everyone."

Carolyn points to God's provision of Steve's job: "We were told we ought to return home within 10 years if Steve was to have any hope of continuing his career in the NHS. Then we read these words: 'How tragic to spend life building a safety net for when God drops you.' It's better to live your life trusting God. Steve got a consultant's post within a year of returning home. That was God's provision." He is now consultant paediatrician in Bradford, not far from their home in Leeds.

Steve is a leader at a small church linked with South Parade Baptist Church, and Carolyn often leads the worship. She is involved with the church's community project in Leeds. She has done two years of a law degree, which she plans to complete next year. She then hopes to work as legal adviser with the project.

One reason for mission's low profile in the church at large, Carolyn believes, is that some British Christians have lost interest in evangelising: "In Zaire, Christians believe that everyone who doesn't know the Lord is lost. Here, faith is so personalised. There, they are desperate to share their faith with other people.

Here we prefer to share money. Giving to charities can be a sop to mission, done to make us feel better. We've slipped away from the truth of people's need for God. People are embarrassed to say that faith is the only solution for the world."

But mission, whether at home or overseas, is crucial. And this is where the missionary society comes in: "It's a means to an end, enabling us to work with our church partners in other countries. The BMS is a resource agency for any Baptist concerned about world mission."

The cut

THE NEW BMS PRESIDENT IS TO MEET THE PEOPLE IN A **NATIONWIDE** TOUR



Saturday 29 June 1996:

Southend for Eastern Area. Keynote speakers: John Passmore and Martin Hewitt

Saturday 14 September 1996:

Southeast Area: Horsham

Friday 11 October 1996:

Metropolitan Area: Haven Green Ealing

Saturday 19 October 1996:

Metropolitan Area, Trinity Baptist Church Sideup Keynote speakers: Sammy Verhaeghe and David Martin

Thursday 17 November 1996:

Bristol for Western Area: Westbury on Trym

Saturday 16 November 1996:

Cardiff, Albany Road, likely venue

Tuesday 19 November 1996:

Carmarthen: with Welsh input

22/23 November 1996:

North Wales

29 November 1996:

Lancs and Cheshire Association, Liverpool

10 January 1997:

South Parade, Leeds for Yorkshire Keynote speaker: Bill Slack

12 January 1997:

South Bank, Middlesborough Keynote speaker: Alan Pain

17 January 1997:

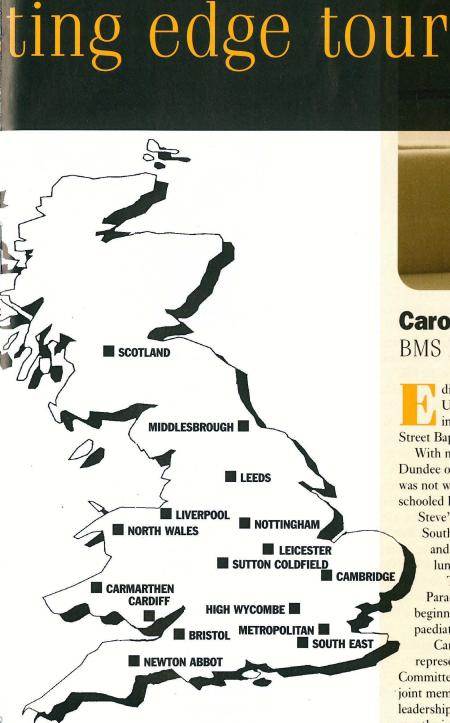
Cambridge, Histon Baptist Church Keynote speaker: Michael Quicke

18 January 1997:

Buckinghamshire, Union High Wycombe

Friday 7 February 1997:

Nottingham: venue to be fixed Keynote speaker: David Coffey



Saturday 8 February 1997:

Leicester: Friar Lane and Braunstone Keynote speaker: John Lewis

Friday 7 March 1997: ?

Newton Abbot for the Southwest.

Friday 14 March 1997:

Sutton Coldfield Baptist Church Keynote speaker: Andrew Green

Friday 11 April 1997:

Celebration in Scotland

Carolyn Green: The way forward

People The new BMS President

BMS PRESIDENT 1996/97

dinburgh born and bred, Carolyn went to St Andrew's University in 1968 to study sciences. With an honours degree in Physiology, Carolyn and her husband Steve joined Rattray Street Baptist church, Dundee in 1972.

With no particular desire to be a teacher, she did a PGCE course in Dundee out of obedience rather than choice, but God's preparation was not wasted when later, in Zaire as a BMS missionary, she homeschooled her sons and taught in secondary and nursing schools.

Steve's career as a doctor took the family to Leeds and they joined South Parade Baptist church. Carolyn helped run the playgroup and established an out-reach to women through a coffee and lunch club.

The couple and their two sons went to Zaire from South Parade in 1979. They returned to Leeds in 1992 having seen the beginnings of revival in Kimpese and trained a Zairian paediatrician to take over Steve's work.

Carolyn, appointed an elder at South Parade in 1993, represented the Yorkshire Baptist Association on BMS General Committee until her appointment as Vice-President. She is also in joint membership of Cragg Hill Baptist church where Steve is in leadership. Andy Stockbridge talks to her about her coming twelve months in office.

The role of BMS President is fairly new having been introduced in 1994. How do you see that role and yourself fulfilling it?

Carolyn Along with chairing meetings of General Committee and taking part in the Baptist Assemblies, I see the role as being the public face of BMS - representing the Society to the churches. There is an element too of representing the churches to BMS as there's always the opportunity to bend the President's ear in the round-the-country travels. As each President does the job for one year, there is continually a fresh impetus. I see my own involvement being to enthuse and encourage the people I meet that they too can to part of the vision of sharing the Good News with the world!

Continues on page 20





Andy A key feature of the year will be your 'At the Cutting Edge' Presidential Tour. Why have you planned this and what do you hope to achieve?

Carolyn 'Mission' has had a bit of a bad press in recent years - not just from outside the church, but also inside. We've grown up believing you "have missions" and "send missionaries" - and I believe this is why a lot of folk have gone off the idea. I want to remind people in the UK Baptist churches, and particularly the ministers and leaders, that mission is what's been in God's heart since the beginning, it's what we should have in our hearts too. We, as Christians have a mission to fulfil, the mission of making Jesus known.

I wanted to go out and meet people, tell them what's going on in BMS and how we are involved in the mission of the whole church - particularly in the cross-cultural context.

I want to encourage the pastors to put mission back into their preaching! I want them to see for themselves that BMS is 100 per cent involved in making Jesus known in the crosscultural context. Either enabling UK Baptists to fulfil God's great commission to them to go outside their own culture to work and witness, or enabling Christians called to work outside their culture, bring the gospel of Jesus to the UK.

Andy Where are these events, and how will ministers and leaders know about them?

Carolyn We have tried to set up breakfast or lunch meetings throughout the country. I will be sending out personal letters of invitation to ministers.

Andv Mission Celebrations are also planned, what is your thinking here?

Carolyn I see these as an opportunity to express our thanks to the tremendous commitment that key BMS personnel in our churches have to mission.

I want to show our appreciation of those doing the nittygritty - our Missionary Secretary, World Mission Contacts, Magazine and Birthday Scheme secretaries, in fact everyone who promotes the work of BMS locally.

I will be personally inviting all these key people to a 6.00 pm reception before the Celebration. This will be a chance

for me to meet them and hear what they have to say. They will also have the opportunity of meeting BMS staff and our key note speakers at the Celebration.

What will be the main emphasis of your message during the year and why do you regard this as important?



Carolyn Well, I believe mission is not an optional extra for any Christian. To have to choose a theme for the year has been a daunting task - especially as I've said that I believe the whole of Scripture shows God's missionary heart. But I believe that Paul in his letter to the Romans has been able to put in a nutshell, the challenge I want to share.

Romans 10 has a neat series of questions about getting the message, the Gospel, to those who need to hear and the final point brings the responsibility fairly and squarely to each of us! Unless we as Christians in the churches in the UK, make Jesus known by word and deed in our own culture or in another, people will still be unable to call on the God who saves. BMS is one organisation committed to this - and I want to make sure others know this and support and USE BMS.

Andv What's your heart and vision for BMS as an organisation?

Carolyn Well what I would love to see is that when any member of a Baptist or Associated church thinks of mission their first consideration is BMS. When they think of mission they think of BMS and look to the Society to help them in fulfilling that calling.

Andy Are there particular new challenges you see BMS facing during the coming year.

Carolyn I think there is a need for us to continue to evaluate what we are doing and not necessarily to be bound by the past. We have to take risks and do new things.

It has been exciting to see what God has done in recent years and obviously with new leadership from our new General Director we anticipate a building on the past. It is exciting. I am sure some things will change and it is challenging. We must pray that God will lead and guide us in this coming year.

country in focus

Facts and figures

The landlocked country of Zimbabwe enjoys political stability, an advanced economy and freedom of worship.

Zimbabwe is a religious country with many people believing in God whether or not they have a commitment to him. Some people still believe in the power of their ancestors spirits controlling their lives - in reality casting total fear and intimidation over them. Zimbabwean church leaders believe that satanism is penetrating the churches causing divisions and scandal, so that there are instances of adultery and rape even among preachers. Young women, too, have had illegitimate children and then dumped them. This is becoming increasingly common; babies have been found abandoned down pit latrines and in rubbish

Religion in Zimbabwe: **Traditional 32%** Non-religious 4% Muslim 2% Christian 62% with growth at 5.6%

Area: 390,580 sq km Population: 11,352,000 (1995) Capital: Harare (pop. 1,316,000) People groups: 94% Bantu origin. Other minorities include Malawians, European, Coloured, Asian, and Mozambiquan refugees.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE

Baptist work effectively began in Zimbabwe in 1913, with the first Baptist church being established in 1920. The Baptist Union of Central Africa (BUCA) grew out of this small beginning and as a result of other African events eventually led to the formation of a separate Baptist Union of Zambia, and then in 1981, the Baptist Union of Zimbabwe.

There are now four Baptist groups in Zimbabwe, all of which are members of the Baptist World Alliance. They are:

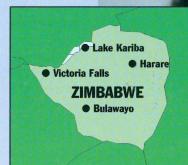
- the Baptist Union of Zimbabwe - until Independence this Union concentrated on settler churches which were predominantly white and urban. Since 1980 it has begun work in rural areas and has black and coloured people in membership.
- the Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe - a black church with links with the Foreign Missions Board of the Southern Baptists (USA).
- the National Baptist Convention (NBC) - formed by four churches in 1989 which had split with the Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe. The NBC has grown and now has over 30 churches; it is open to all races, though it is mainly black.
- the United Baptists a group started by an American Baptist who then returned to the USA. The

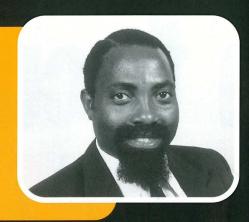
United Baptists work in the Eastern Highlands and in Harare. They have about 2000 members. Their General Secretary Joshua Ndube was formerly in Robert Mugabe's cabinet.

Zimbabwe has severe social and economic problems.

Unemployment is widespread. Fewer than 3% of the 300,000 who leave school every year find a job. This has obviously had repercussions in the churches and has led to lobbying for self-help projects. The NBC has its own projects programme aimed at creating self employment for its members and those of other churches led by Philip Jambaya who specifically trained so that he could help others who wished to start their own self-help projects. The projects people have undertaken

include catering, tailoring, welding and video production. Churches are helping out too: as part of the scheme Luveve **Baptist Church** Bulawayo is extending its church building and pastor's house.





PATRICK FACE MOYO

Patrick Moyo was influential in bringing about the birth of the NBC in 1990, and has served as its President since its inception. He is in every sense a charismatic figure through whom God has chosen to work.

Patrick was born into a non-Christian home, one of six children. All the boys of the family were named after the white men his father had worked for, hence Solomon, Patrick and Pharaoh.

He was led to the Lord in June 1965 by a missionary who was starting a church next to his home. Almost immediately, though still at school, he started preaching and teaching the word of God to others. From school he went to work in the clothing industry as a general helper and was promoted to be a Trainee Manager. However he left this work in 1974 to go and prepare for the ministry at the Baptist College. Whilst he was training he pastored a small church in a rural area, and after he graduated, Patrick was called to the pastorate at Mkoba Baptist Church, Gweru. When he arrived at Mkoba it had less than 20 members; today it has more than 700.

Patrick has become a national and international figure in the Zimbabwean Baptist Church scene. He has conducted crusades and revivals across Zimbabwe, and leads seminars for young people on spiritual warfare, healing, the Holy Spirit, leadership and discipleship. He held a leadership post in the Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe before the parting of the ways in 1988.

The National Baptist Convention had four churches when Patrick Moyo began his leadership of it, but today it has 30 churches all over Zimbabwe. He also manages to find the time to serve on the executive of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) and to chair Target 2000, described as "the spiritual arm of the EFZ" and part of the DAWN (Discipling a Whole Nation) vision concept whose main objectives are research and the planting of more than 10,000 churches in every small community in Zimbabwe before the year 2000.

Patrick is married and has four sons and two daughters, all of whom are involved in the work of the Lord in their local church.

FROM PATRICK MOYO

The National Baptist Churches of Zimbabwe have embarked seriously on a ministry of prayer. In fact almost every NBC church has someone who is responsible for leading the church to pray. We also practise fasting from time to time and sometimes this involves the whole church to fast for a week or so. As we have spent time in prayer and fasting we have found that revival has come to our churches; people who had been given up by doctors have been healed; demons have been cast out; others have been transformed and their Christian ministry has brought forth fruit; spiritual gifts have started to operate and revival has come to the churches.

SOME REAL LIFE TESTIMONIES FROM ZIMBABWE

Martha Mangisi was about 30 years old, and had a debilitating facial condition. She had sought help for this from many professionals, but to no



avail. Late one night, around midnight, she was walking past the Baptist church near where she lived when she heard noises - in fact it was people at prayer. She decided to

see if these people could help her with her problem. When she got to the doors of the church they were locked, but she knocked, and knocked, and eventually someone opened them. When she went inside the church she

found the pastor and a few young men praying. She told them her plight. In reply they told her about the way of salvation and she surrendered her life to the Lord there and then. She was then prayed for and was healed instantly. The following Sunday she brought her three daughters to church, who later, gave their lives to the Lord.

Mrs Beatrice Warambwa was brought up in a family which was involved in ancestral worship, although they also knew a little about God.



Beatrice too got involved in the worship of ancestral spirits and was appointed a medium. One of her brothers became a Christian, and he then led Beatrice to the

Lord. She began a discipleship training programme and learned that Jesus has power over all evil spirits. Her response was to return home and burn all the trappings that belonged to her former life. Things were not easy for her as she then came under spiritual attack, but after prayer and deliverance she is now a happy Christian woman.

AIDS

AIDS has got Africa in its grip; already the hospitals in Zimbabwe record deaths daily from AIDS. It is reckoned by the year 2000 nearly two million people in Zimbabwe will be infected with the AIDS virus. Zimbabweans describe it as "the monster of the people".

As a response to this the churches are fighting for people to be disciplined in their sexual relationships.

The church is calling for God anointed people to stand and say "God send me to the shattered life, the life full of many problems." Zimbabwe needs people who can pray for such diseases as AIDS to vanish from a believer; people who can stand and rebuke the spirits of adultery and corruption; people who can teach the truth to others.



PROJECT 96: ARISE AND BUILD!

We hope we've whetted your appetite for what is happening in the church and country of Zimbabwe. If you would like to find out more AND be part of the vision of enabling all men, women and children to hear the gospel by the year 2000, send off for our project pack Arise and Build! Money raised by this project will go to help evangelism and church planting in Zimbabwe.

Write to Christine Neilson, Baptist Missionary Society, PO Box 49, 129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA. Telephone: 01235 512077



Steve Seymour reflects on his role as a missionary in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe is a country that stands out from the rest of the Sub-Saharan Africa. The economy and government are relatively stable and the infrastructure sound. This is perhaps why many mutlinational companies and Aid Agencies are leaving Lagos and Nairobi for the secure and attractive city of Harare.

Tourist images of Victoria Falls, safari parks and wild animals do not convey the daily struggle of many thousands in the high density suburbs and drought stricken areas. I doubt if the many tourists each year have any idea of what the living conditions are like of the hotel staff who serve them.

It is within these contrasts that I struggle to fit in with my role. Many of the churches and communities that we work with are on the margin of society both economically and socially. Most of what I have been doing revolves around the four different Baptist denominations as I encourage their members to make use of the many resources and structures that are available in Zimbabwe. For many reasons we do not seem to be utilising what is available and remain on the periphery of society in general. I have been told that the missionaries taught that 'you cannot be a businessman and a Christian'. Perhaps that explains part of the problem.

We are trying to build up the capacity of the various groups and individual members to play an active role in the economy and life of the community. This involves training in small business management and for others it involves training in drought mitigation. We have also focused on raising awareness of the youth in the churches regarding developmental issues.

Pam Seymour relates an incident in a church service

I'm in my element, in the back row, mostly hidden from view, doing my attempt at a Shona dance, singing lustily..... I was quite unprepared for the response I would receive after the service.

"I've never seen a white woman dance in church!"

"She can speak Shona too!"

"She must be married to a Shona man."

This was the English service conducted at our church. Our Shona ladies group had been asked to partake for the first time. Sadly there is a distinct class division here in Zimbabwe, and this extends to the church with services in English and Shona being held at separate times - an offshoot from colonial days. In many churches the English service congregation is almost all white, whereas in ours the opposite is true, with middle class Shona people making up the majority. Shona nannies, maids and gardeners and other workers make up the afternoon congregation.

Apology

In last month's Country Focus on Brazil, our article Diary of a Visitor gave the impression that a Baptist church in São Paulo had been built by resident BMS missionary David Meikle and others. We should like to make it clear that the church was, in fact, built by the people of the São Paulo favela, supported by missionary Paul Holmes and funded by his home church, Broadwater Baptist in Worthing, a church in Brazil and the people of the favela. We apologise for the misunderstanding.

COUNTY IN THE CASE OF THE CASE

Walking with Jesus

IS THE AGE OF MISSION AT AN END? DAVID POUNTAIN ISSUES THE CHALLENGE TO RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO THE COMMISSION JESUS GAVE HIS DISCIPLES TWENTY CENTURIES AGO

The call to mission

is first of all a call

to discipleship.

Jesus calls us to

walk with him into

the heart of the

world's needs.

issionaries! Do we still need them? I'm surprised that the churches are still interested. Perhaps the greatest surprise is that our Lord's great commission is as important today as ever it was. In spite of the growth of the global church, particularly in Africa and Asia, we are not keeping up with the growth in world population. In fact the number of those who have not heard the gospel is increasing.

Look at the world as a whole. Yes, the wealth of some is increasing, but the poverty of many more is also growing and there is a widening gulf between rich and poor.

We have been free of global conflict for more than 50 years, yet vicious, violent local wars like those in Bosnia, Rwanda, Chechnya and Angola continue to take their toll on human life. Some think that our entry into

the 21st century will herald a new age of intolerance and indifference to human suffering.

The importance of fulfilling the great commission is as important as ever. The world still needs to hear the good news and to experience the healing, reconciling love of Christ. So who are to be the new missioners of the 21st century?

The call to mission is first of all a call to discipleship. "Come, leave your nets and follow me," says Jesus. It is a call not to march for Jesus but to walk, or to go on a pilgrimage, with him into the heart of the world's need. That walk with Jesus can be a journey into our own neighbourhoods and culture or it can be cross-cultural, which can mean moving into a run-down urban area of one of our large cities or even into another country or continent. But it is always in response to his call to follow him.

However, wherever Jesus calls us to walk with him, it is for all of us a call to discipleship. Disciples are pupils, students, learners and this calls for some humility. We can learn nothing unless first of all we are prepared to accept that we know little. It is so different from the arrogant view of those who set out believing that they and the Lord have "got it sorted." Those who soon find that they are getting nowhere, that their grand visions are theirs alone and not shared by those they work with.

One missionary complained bitterly that no matter what he did, no matter how much time he spent working with the people, no matter what

he said, he could see very little fruit for his years of work in an African village. He shared his thoughts with the local chief. "We recognise your devotion," said the chief. "We can all see that you are a person of deep faith and conviction. We understand how much time and hard work you are putting in. The trouble is that we can see in your eyes that

you don't like us." Many missionaries in Africa have found their first term of service extremely hard. However, when they returned they discovered a different spirit, a greater acceptance of their presence

and ministry. It is as though the African were saying: "Ah, you have come back to us. Now we know you care!"

At least 80 per cent of communication is non-verbal and our witness for Christ means not only preaching the word but living it. What does "God is love" mean if our eyes, if



our lives do not show that same love?

Our walk with Jesus, as the early disciples discovered and later bore witness to, is a walk with one who has a deep love and concern for people. The first disciples accompanied him into the homes of the poor. They watched him reach out in compassion to touch the leprosy sufferer. They were with him when he sat with publicans and sinners, the outcasts of society, listening to their problems and getting to know them.

So the modern missionaries are those who are prepared to be disciples, learners all of the time. They are those who realise that other cultures are rich with much to offer the rest of us. They are those who understand that the white, western way is not the only way to be Christian and that the gospel is entering into the cultures of Africa, Asia and Latin America, transforming them and bringing the gospel alive in new ways. They are those who know how important it is to belong to their adopted country and culture, learning the language and understanding the

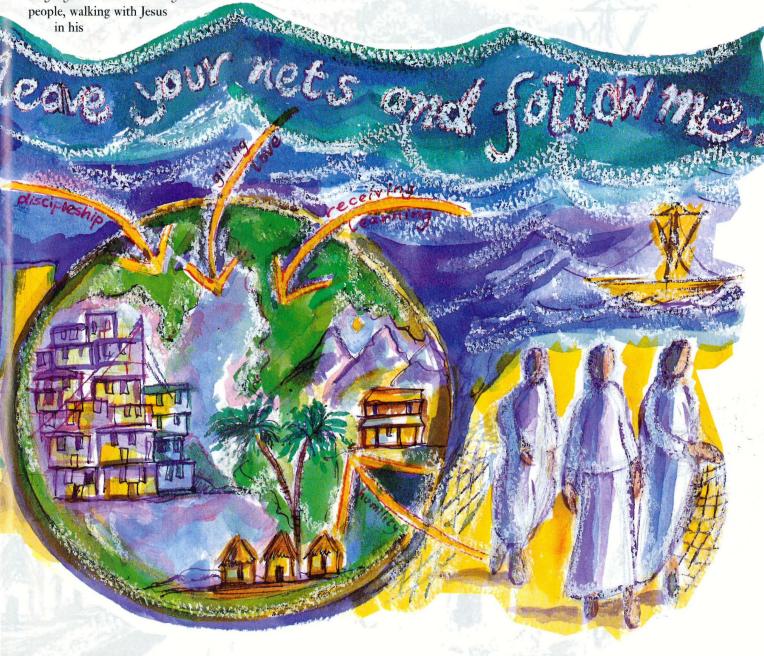
incarnational ministry.

Yes, the world still needs committed Christian people to be witnesses of the gospel. The great commission of Jesus in Matthew 28:19 is as valid as ever. He is calling you and me to follow him today and for some that means leaving home to work in another country and culture. But for all of us it means being prepared to learn, to be aware of the need to grow and respond to change. It is also about being open to people with all that means in terms of risk and vulnerability.

However, walking with Jesus, we have his promise that he will be with us, "until the end of time".



David Pountain is Missionary Herald Consulting Editor and minister at Florence Road Baptist Church, Brighton







A light hearted call to mission by Jan Kendall Take a break to ask yourself:

ARE YOU CUT OUT TO BE A MISSIONARY?

Answer a, b, or c throughout.

- 1. What's your idea of a delicious meal?
- a) Prawn cocktail, steak and chips, lemon mousse
- b) Friendship is more important; I'll eat anything amongst those I love
- c) Freshly killed and plucked chicken, followed by yogurt all eaten with my fingers, of course!
- 2. How easy would it be for you to learn another language?
- a) I have a good ear for sounds
- b) I rather hope that the people I work with will understand English
- c) Not at all easy, but I'd have the motivation to learn, wouldn't I?
- 3. Should a missionary be married or single?
- a) Definitely single; a spouse and children can really tie you down and prevent you getting on with God's work
- b) Definitely married; you need a partner working in cross-cultural situations
- c) Whichever God wants them to be
- 4. Do you think having a sense of humour is an important quality for a missionary to have?
- a) Yes; everyone needs to laugh at themselves sometimes
- b) Well, you're going to make mistakes, aren't you, so it's best not to mind being an object of fun
- c) No; it's not important at all. Salvation is a serious business wherever you are in the world
- 5. What about the creepy-crawlies? Fortunately I don't suffer from arachnophobia
- b) I couldn't use the sugar if it had ants in it
- c) Well, they're just part of the culture, aren't they?
- 6. Do you think it essential that all missionaries receive theological and ministerial training?
- a) No, not if God has called them to work in another capacity
- b) Yes, I would think it absolutely essential
- c) Yes, they've got to be better educated than the people they are going to minister to
- 7. How are your practical and endurance skills?
- a) I enjoy 4WD driving off made-up roads
- b) I could paddle my own canoe if I had to
- c) The BMS would have to provide a mechanic for me
- 8. What would you most miss about home once on the mission field?
- a) The television
- b) My family and friends
- c) Marks and Spencer

- 9. Do you have a strong stomach?
- a) No, I have to be very careful about what I eat
- b) Yes, I can eat anything
- c) I just love curries, the hotter the better
- 10. What is the ideal age for a missionary?
- a) 18 30
- b) 30 45
- c) Who's counting?
- 11. How's your general knowledge?
- a) I know the difference between a yam and a yak
- b) I know the difference between a chapatti and a chipolata
- c) Lousy
- 12. How about your Christian commitment to date?
- a) I've been reading all the right books
- b) I haven't been that active as a Christian but everything will change when I get out in a missionary situation
- c) I believe I have been active doing exactly what God wants me to do
- 13. How important is health care to you especially as where you're going as a missionary won't have an NHS?
- a) Very I jog regularly
- b) I know what my right hand's for!
- c) I hope BMS missionaries are covered by BUPA
- 14. How adaptable do you think you are?
- a) Very, but I would need to introduce a routine based on life in the UK so that everyone knows where they stand
- b) I'm always game to rise to new challenges
- c) I hope I'm a flexible person
- 15. Could you survive being alone in a strange country?
- a) Yes, I enjoy solitude
- b) It would be okay as long as there was a telephone in the house
- c) I am quite happy working on my own
- 16. And where does God fit in all this?
- a) Somewhere, I hope
- God has led me in every step of my life and I am open to where he may lead in the future
- God is calling me to consider working in a crosscultural situation







tor education.

7

ACTION card

WOMEN AND LITERACY

support the organisation. You may wish to lobby your MP on aid

1216, Bangladesh (postage 35p) or to The Derby Multicultural

Please send your card either to Nijera Shikhi, PO Box 8049, Dhaka

Centre, Dairy House Road, Derby DE23 8HN, to encourage and

them. One such is the Multicultural Centre in Derby, suffering

Answers

9 S 90 9 q 9T c 2 9 8 P 5 ST c 2 32 9 q DI C 5 9 q 9 S IB c 2 P 5 3 B 12 C 2 g 6 g q II g 2 P 5 a 2 OT c 2 3 S g q 6 c 5 9 q 3 S 8 c 2 9 8 9 q L c 5 9 6 9 **P** 2 c 2 9 B 9 P 5 c 5 **B B** g q 3 c 2 P 5 32 90 9 8 P 5 95

How did you score?

- 32 48 Oh dear, you like your home comforts and life as it is don't you? However there's no discomfort involved with getting better acquainted with missionaries needs, praying for them and helping out in practical ways. And whilst stick-in-the-muds might be a barrier to missionary service for us, be warned, God has a habit of using people in spite of themselves!
- 49 64 You've made a good start and you already know something of what it takes to be a missionary. We're all of us in a learning situation for our entire lives, so don't stop now, but carry on finding out more of what God is doing in the world today and of the people he is using to accomplish his purposes. The big question for you is: are you willing for God to change you that bit more, and to be more flexible and adaptable? And you never know, you might discover God has done just that and he's calling you to stop learning about missionaries and to actually become one!
- 65 80 Well done! You certainly know what it takes to be a missionary! Don't let it end there though. Maybe God is speaking to you to ask you to become one! Take time out, perhaps consolidate this knowledge and along with your church and Christian friends ask God if he would have you make a change of direction to work crossculturally for him?

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2/10/17 (10/10)	6	T

Enter your scores here



To the beat of a

different drum

FRESH BACK
FROM THEIR
SIX-MONTH
TOUR AT THE
SHARP END OF
MISSION,
FIVE BMS
28:19 ACTION
TEAMS ARE
REFLECTING
ON THEIR
LIFE-CHANGING
EXPERIENCES.
SAM GIBSON
REPORTS

ll change is the name of the game for the 28:19
Action Team
members, who returned last month from their overseas assignments and are now touring Baptist churches, schools and youth groups across Britain.

Attitudes, team relations, personal relationships with God and even hairstyles have altered and developed in the six months the 22 young people have been overseas. And it is not just they who have changed; each team has made a mark on the people they have been working with, leaving behind something of themselves.

In Trinidad, Daryl Milford and Angela Richardson did such a good job with a remedial education class at the Baptist Fifth Company Primary School in Chaguanas that the principal decided to continue the class when the team had gone.

Anna Wallace's drama classes at a local Baptist High School were so successful that she was asked to direct a short play for an their families.

The India/Sri Lanka Team saw a similar success when seven young people made commitments after a youth service led by the team.

During their stay in Tirana, the Albania team saw the church youth group grow in size. The Sunday

School classes they took and the

football team
begun by
Andy Third
and Hugh
ClementsJewry are
expected to
continue with
Albanian leaders and

thanks to Gavin
Carpenter's music lessons, several young people are now able to play guitar for praise and worship in the church.

BMS missionary Saverio Guarna praises God for the team: "They dedicated the maximum of their strength and vivacious energies to carry out a wonderful and

insurance company awards dinner. School assemblies taken by the team drew many students to lunchtime Youth for Christ meetings; at one meeting in February three Hindu girls took the bold step of making decisions for Christ, something that will certainly put them under pressure in

important ministry."

Perhaps the greatest sight for the team however, was to see God transform the gipsy community in Ali Demi where they had been leading Bible studies. Melanie Fernandes says: "When we first arrived, this community had scarcely any idea of who Jesus was, and now we have been privileged to see them accept him as a true friend. Prayer times at the Bible studies were once awkward and rather nervous affairs but now they pray with eagerness and with determination. Many want to be baptised and classes for preparation will commence in early June.

"Although we have been working in the midst of this, it has often felt as though we were bystanders as we have watched the Holy Spirit work in people's lives and draw them towards Jesus."

It hasn't all been success, of course, and the teams have had to work hard during their time overseas. The Trinidad team worked every weekend with evangelistic youth events and touring Baptist churches all over the island. They have been encouraged by the response, however, and the boys have even been asked to preach in some churches!

Team difficulties posed problems at the beginning of the year but with much prayer and the decision to subtly for the future and will continue to do so These young Christians are now

pull

together, the team say they have "come through stronger than before and more understanding of each other's differences".

Daryl Milford in Trinidad and Nigel Cope in Sri Lanka both had to overcome a small identity crisis whilst overseas. A simple trip to the barber left Daryl with a bald head which he calls his Apostle Paul haircut. It did a great deal for team relations as it made every one else laugh! Nigel resorted to allowing Sarah Brown and Sarah Barker to cut his hair after an elderly woman spent an entire evening talking to him thinking he was a girl. On another occasion he was chased by a swimming attendant for not wearing a hat like all the other ladies!

Some changes are external – don't worry if you are greeted by an Albania team member with a kiss on both cheeks or if John Condie walks around your church bare footed and in a skirt – but some will not be immediately apparent to those who do not know these young people well, or even to themselves.

God is and has been

continue to do so.
These young
Christians are now
leading their lives to the
beat of a different drum –
God's drum. And their
experiences on the BMS
28:19 Action Team scheme
will surely be expressed in a
new rhythm.

altering them

28:19 28:19 28



prayerfocus

A regular update from BMS colleagues around the world, compiled by Sam Gibson



David and Catherine Meikle BRAZIL

Social and financial problems within the favelas of São Paulo are increasing and floods earlier this year have created the danger of landslides and made many areas uninhabitable. People are dying each day, buried below tons of earth and the loss of houses and all that these people possess is a tragic sight.

David's role as Co-ordinator for Mission and Evangelism for the ABC Association of 73 Baptist Churches and 29 congregations has meant he has travelled around this year visiting many churches working out strategies for outreach into the favelas. Projects in the pipeline include a part time school to be opened in Vila San Pedro for children who come down from the north of the country with little or no reading and writing skills. They have no hope of entering the local schools system which is expensive.

David is looking for ways to bring the pastors in his Association together to discuss the areas they would like to plant a church or support and develop an existing church or preaching point within their area. It is exciting to discover the varied opportunities and needs which exist within each area. The Association has also been offered a piece of land and some buildings from a local trust fund which it intends to be used for the recuperation of child drug addicts, alcoholics and prostitutes etc. If the Association accepts the offer, the local churches would be jointly responsible for the running of a project.

Please pray:

- of the people of the favelas who are forming their own groups and meeting with government officials and housing associations to deal with their problems. Pray for the people as they piece their lives together and for safety.
- of for a suitable teacher/worker and funds to maintain the new part time school.
- for unity and wisdom among the pastors with whom David works.
- for the future of a project for needy children on trust property.

zaire



Brenda Earl

A new doctor has arrived at Pimu Hospital to take some responsibilities from the shoulders of Director Dr Nolembo. Dr Lilongo and his wife travelled for several days by plane, canoe and Land Rover to reach Pimu from Kinshasa, spending a night in the jungle when the Land Rover broke down. A boy of 18 died an hour after admission to the hospital; cause unknown. The family then beat a woman and accused her of putting a spell on the boy, something which often happens in a culture rife with witchcraft.

Please pray

- o for Dr Lilongo as he settles in
- for Brenda as she prepares herself for retirement this summer



Peter and Susan Cousins

Peter's book on science and religion has been accepted for publication and is now being edited. It is unlikely to appear in Brazilian bookshops until the latter half of the year but it's future now seems assured. He has been

asked to write another book but is hesitant at the moment and whilst he will most certainly write something over the next six months, he is not vet sure what.

In February, the Cousins and the children they take care of had a week off for

the Carnival holiday. It is difficult to explain that Christians have nothing to do with this festival which is big business centring around sex, drugs, alcohol and spiritism – nothing like the Notting Hill Carnival! Most Christians make use of the holiday to leave town for spiritual retreats.

Please pray:

- Peter and Susan's Kombi was stolen in February; they have to rely on borrowed vehicles to take the five children in their care to school and to their various churches on Sunday mornings.
- Pam, one of the Cousins' charges, has to decide whether to continue her education in São Paulo, go to boarding school or friends in Britain, live with her parents and go to an American school in Salvador or stay with relatives in the USA. At just 15 years old, it's a daunting decision.



Keith and Barbara Hodges

BRA7II

Keith who is Dean of the Parana Baptist Seminary and head of its Old Testament Department is also acting as interim pastor for a church in Piraquara.

The church has many internal problems which led to a split in February with the youth leader and his wife walking out and most of the young people following.

Conflicting worship services were scheduled for the next weekend but God

intervened.

Keith met with both sides and prayed with them and on the Sunday, the usual congregation appeared.

On the Sunday night, most of the groups that had left were present to hear Andrew North from BMS preach and the church was filled with confession of sin, cries for help and a moving of the Spirit which Keith says "did our hearts good to see and experience".

Keith and Barbara have officially accepted an invitation to work with the Portuguese Baptist Convention from January 1997 where they hope to serve until their retirement.

There are many issue to bring into line between now and then for which Keith and Barbara would appreciate our prayers.

Please pray:

- that the right person be found to take over pastoral care of the congregation at Piraquara.
- of the work to be done now in healing the internal problems of the Piraquara church.
- for the youth leader and his wife who have not returned to the church since they walked out.
- for Keith and Barbara who are frightened of the implications of their move; they have been involved in church planting, and latterly theological education, in Brazil for 25 years.

africa - zaire

Steve and Elizabeth Allford

The Baptist Community of the River Zaire (CBFZ) held a service in the Protestant Cathedral in Kinshasa to commemorate the arrival of the first missionaries in Zaire in 1878 and to give out certificates to all the pastors in Kinshasa who have been consecrated over the years.

Widows and family members collected certificates on behalf of those pastors who had already died. It appears that the pastors have never had a proper certificate and the CBFZ hopes to make sure that all of their pastors across the country are in possession of certificates by the church meetings this month.

Choirs from the different churches sang and Dr. Marini of ECZ preached on Hebrews. The service lasted from 11am until 3.30pm! Guests included representatives from the other protestant church groups (Salvation Army, American Baptists, Swedish Baptists, Presbyterians etc) and local political leaders.



europe



Saverio and Betsy Guarna

ALBANIA

The training of Albanian leaders is a high priority for the First Baptist Church of Tirana in view of its growth over the first year since its establishment.

Eight adults are currently attending bi-monthly seminars run by the Albanian Bible Institute and some of these young people are looking forward to full theological education.

The Albanian Association of Missionaries (AEP) believes in ten years time, there will be around 300,000 believers in Albania requiring the support of 2,500 pastors plus hundreds of church leaders, including church secretaries, youth ministers, worship leaders, Sunday School teachers, and so on.

Saverio and Betsy are thrilled with the progress of the Gospel in Albania and feel they are working to make history.

Please pray:

- for the continued spread of the Gospel in Albania.
- for the continued growth of the First Baptist Church of Tirana.
- for the training of young Albanian leaders in the Church; may God call more to full time service.

Mark and Clare Ord

ITALY

young people's Bible study

group in their home which

It is more of a discussion

group as Mark is not able to

speak as much as he does in

English and he and Claire

understand the discussion.

particularly for personal

needs, but they are making

The group is unused to

are not always able to

praying together,

The Ords have begun a

they are enjoying.

progress.

Claire is expecting a baby at the end of July which the couple hope will be born at a small hospital which was originally set up by the evangelical churches in Genova.

They are in the UK on Home Assignment this month.

Please pray:

- for Mark and Claire's knowledge of Italian, that it will not cause a barrier in their work.
- for a safe pregnancy and
- for a fulfilling Home Assignment and the

- birth.
- opportunity for Claire to visit her dad who is very ill.



Ryder and Heather Rogers

ALBANIA

A road project supported by the Florida Baptist Men's Movement has been given the go-ahead to lay sewerage pipes and asphalt the road in



The mayor would like to name one of the roads after Ryder but he said no.

For one thing in Albanian it would sound like rew-ger rude-er roggers and secondly he says the glory is God's not man's.

He suggested a name such as Friendship Road -Rruga Miqesia - would be nicer.

Please pray:

that this project would go ahead with no problems.



Yvonne Clark HUNGARY

Short term volunteer worker Yvonne has settled quickly into teaching English at the International Baptist Lay Academy in Szigetszentmiklós, near Budapest.

Yvonne has four intermediate level students from Ukraine, Russia and Serbia who are learning English and Theology in her class.





They all have some kind of leadership role in their home churches although none are training for the ministry as yet.

When teaching English as a foreign language, it is very useful to be able to draw and one of Yvonne's colleagues, Paul who teaches New Testament to lower level students is very gifted in this area.

Even he struggled however when after one lesson, a student asked him what circumcision meant – fortunately another student in the class was able to explain and Paul was saved the embarrassment!

Please pray:

- thanking God that Yvonne has settled in so quickly and that her students are making good progress.
- that God will use these students on their return to their Eastern European countries.



Chris and Sarah Mattock

Congratulations to Chris and Sarah on the birth of Judith Helen on 4 March.





Roger and Nikki Pearce

ALBANIA

Roger and Nikki have been based in Tirana in central Albania since January and are now in the midst of language study, a difficult task as Shqip (Albanian) is a complex language.

The couple remain in Tirana until October or November when they intend to move on to Kruje in the north, beginning education and primary health care tasks.

Please pray:

- for language study.
- for the health and safety of the Pearce's and their eight month old baby, James.
- for easy adaptation to the culture.

nepal



Corinna Woods

Corinna has been on home assignment in the UK since September 1995. At the time of writing, she is due to return to Nepal on April 21 to begin work at a newly created sixth form in Dullu, sharing in the preparation of teenagers to become primary school teachers. The ultimate aim is to improve the low standard of education in village schools and in the status of primary school teaching in particular. Corinna will teach child development, methodology, supervise teaching practice, help with English language tuition for staff and students, and organise seminars and workshops.

Please pray:

- that Corinna will settle quickly into her new role and establish good relationships.
- for homesicknesses as she misses family and friends.
- for the month of language study Corinna undertakes on arrival in Nepal.

MAY 1996

Arrivals

Sheila Samuals from Delhi Angus and Carol MacNeill from Sangklaburi

Departures

Ann Bothamley to Vellore Saverio Guarna and Betsy Guarna-Moore to Tirana

Overseas Visits

John Passmore to North Africa Sian Williams to Zaire Derek Rumbol to Zaire

Anonymous gifts

October 1, 1995 to February 29, 1996 **TOTAL** £3,728.12

Legacies

October 1, 1995 to February 29, 1996
We are grateful for the support of those who remember the work of the gospel in their wills and we give thanks to God for the following bequests.

Martin Miss Mary 2,058.00

Martin Miss V M 500.00

Mulhern Miss Gladys F 500.00

Mulhern Miss Gladys F 500.00

Petch Miss Emma P 1,276.34

Phelps Mrs Nellie M 1,000.00

Poynter Mrs M 10,000.00

Poynter Mrs M 10,000.00

Poynter Mrs M 10,000.00

Priest Mrs M E P 4,904.28

Pringle Miss G C 2,953.92

Roberts M G D 15,000.00

Rose Miss Freda M L 1,068.65

Rundle Miss A M 440.35

Selby Mrs F P 33,000.00

Smith Miss Violet 0 250.00

Smith Miss Violet 0 250.00

Smith Miss E M 11.25

Springet Miss Marie J15,433.88

Stapley Mrs B J 1,000.00

Stapley Revd H L 500.00

Storer Miss B W 10,750.00

Stokes Louisa G 2,000.00

Storer Miss B W 10,750.00

Stokes Louisa G 2,000.00

Storer Miss S P 1,000.00

Storer Miss S P 1,000.00

Turner Mrs Edna 3,347.79

Turner Mrs Edna 1,447

Turner Mrs Edna 3,347.79

Turner Mrs Edna 3,347.79

Turner Mrs Kathleen Vates J A 244,682.13

BMS projects

The totals raised to March 26, 1996: Breaking Chains£24,657
Deka Bangladesh£16,235
Sawadee £10,951
Mighty Warrior £173



What they A so a boy I had food which is now as Region with some voted and the source of the source

about the

s a boy I had the reputation that I would eat anything! I still enjoy food which is just as well because as a missionary in Bangladesh and now as Regional Representative for Europe I ate and am still presented with some very special and 'interesting' meals. Eating and feasting are

important parts of many religious and cultural festivals which is probably why missionaries often talk about food in prayer letters and when on home assignment.

In Bangladesh we enjoyed goat curry for our Christmas dinner and got used to eating rice pudding

with our hands from the same banana leaf the curry had just been served on. Often when visiting villages a chicken or duck would be killed after we had arrived. (After all it would have been a shame

Rat-atouile

villages a chicken or duct had arrived. (After all it was a chicken or duct had arrived.)

to kill it, if for some reason the guests from the town did not come.)
On one occasion at the equivalent of

an Association Assembly I remember that lunch was not served until five o'clock because the pig had escaped and half the village had been off chasing it during the morning Bible study sessions. As a visitor I was often given the special privilege of having the chicken or fish head on my plate. My Area Secretary soon learned that it was worth his while to sit near me on such occasions as he could then benefit from these delicacies which I found difficult to eat.

I often wondered about the men and women who had become Christians leaving other religions where they had followed strict

food rules for many years. They had been told what was clean or unclean and what they could and could not eat. I noticed that for some of them, even though they had left that religion, they still did not eat the particular meats which had previously been forbidden to them.

One day I was visiting a village where all the people belonged to a particular tribal group.

They were very poor in a good year and this had been a bad one. It was a time of year when they had eaten all the rice from last year's harvest and were just beginning to plant for the next crop. All they had was some wheat which they had grown in the winter. We told them not to make any special arrangements as we did not want a large meal before going to sleep; a snack after the evening prayer meeting would be fine. During the meeting in the church, which started at 8pm and lasted two hours, I noticed that some

ad Tohlowed Strict

add All All An in Stall

John Passmore takes a sideways view

of the young men were missing and wondered what they were doing. I found out once the meeting was over and we were back at the head man's house sitting on the mud veranda.

Because it would have cost money to have the wheat ground into flour for making chapattis, the women had prepared the meal in the same way they would have done with rice; only they were boiling the wheat as whole grains. They were also preparing the curry. We were told that the men had been busy hunting and that there was a special dish being cooked for us. I happened to look over to where the meal was being made and saw what the delicacy was. The thought of great blobs of sticky, boiled wheat was already diminishing my appetite. The curry should have helped it down but when I saw what they were cooking I didn't really feel like eating at all.

I began to realise something of how people felt about eating what they thought was unclean food and why they still found it difficult, if not impossible, to eat certain meats. Not that I had ever been forbidden to eat this meat, but then, I had never ever been offered rat curry before!

John Passmore, the BMS Europe Representative, was a missionary in Bangladesh for 10 years



FOLLOWING THE ANTIOCH EXAMPLE

"Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them" – Acts 13:2.

Who said it? I know the Holy Spirit did but WHO actually spoke these words? The Holy Spirit uses people to hear and articulate his messages to the church; so who said it at Antioch?

Tantalisingly, we don't know. Maybe that's intentional, to help us focus on the role of the church in the missionary call. This role is often neglected, even ignored, in an evangelical culture which has majored on the individual rather than the community.

Yet, as Antioch shows, the church has a crucial role in testing, confirming and implementing the call of God. The Lord may at times use individuals, acting alone, in a special way, but the

encouragement and solidarity of a supportive church is the Biblical norm and cannot be over-estimated in mission.

Effective intercession, financial support, loving concern, felt participation all flow from partnership which is strengthened if the church is in the process from the very beginning – even if the testing of the call causes delay.

The church is called, too, as Antioch shows.

Exceptional leaders were to go and added responsibilities would fall on those staying at home. Were they ready? Could they cope? Would Antioch ever have sent Barnabas and Saul without ALL of them being called by God?

The call came through the church, it was confirmed in the church and the pioneering mission that followed was owned by the church. In this way the Holy Spirit was at work and it seems to me this Antioch model is a good one to copy.

Individuals, churches and societies take note!

John Greenshields is pastor of Bridge of Don Baptist Church, Aberdeen. At the present time two missionary couples have been sent out from this church and are now serving with the BMS in Nepal.



6 Setapart? Torne



Administrative assistant Bangladesh

To help with administration and training in the central office of the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha. They seek someone to work with them in modifying technical systems and in training in management techniques and practicalities.

Ministerial couples Trinidad

To serve small churches in isolated communities, working with people of largely African origin. The three-month assignment will involve working in partnership with local church leaders.

MISSIONARIES

Experienced surgeon Bangladesh

The Christian Hospital in Chandraghona needs an experienced surgeon to work closely with the Bengali Medical Superintendent there, managing and supervising surgical treatment on inpatients. There will be an involvement in training. FRCS qualifications essential.



The Christian Hospital in Chandraghona needs an experienced director of nursing to manage the nursing care of inpatients and outpatients. The post includes the supervision of ward work and an involvement in training. Wide work experience and RGN/RM qualifications are essential.

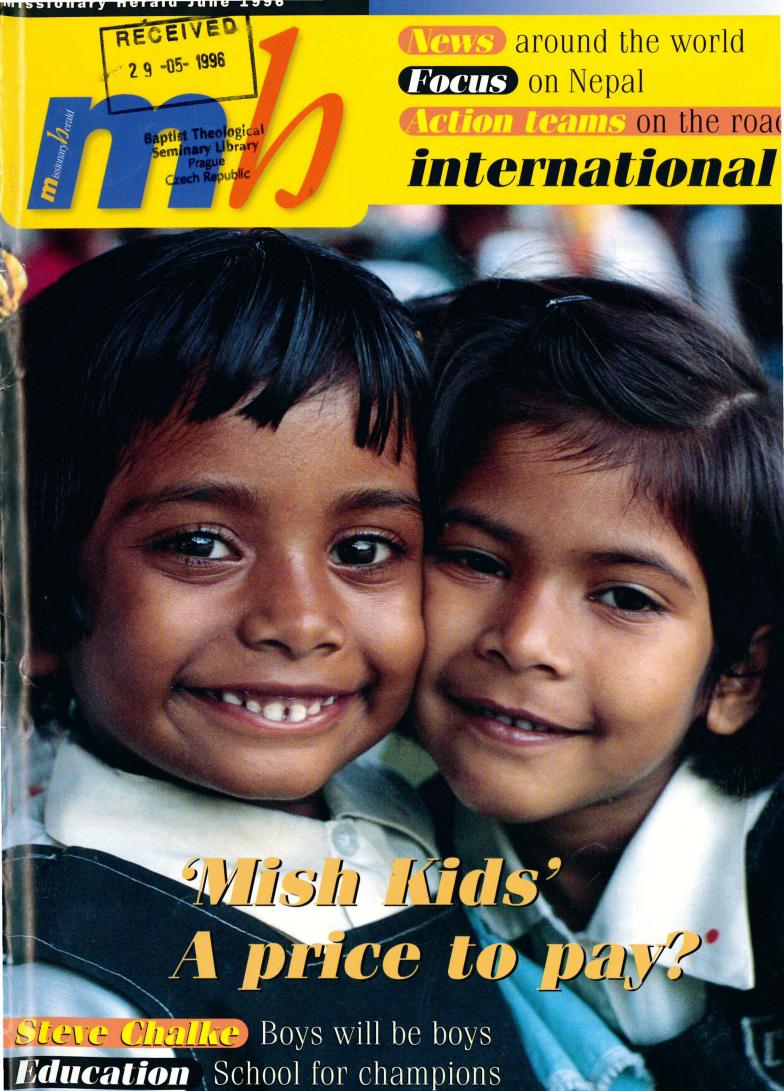
Ministerial couple Sri Lanka

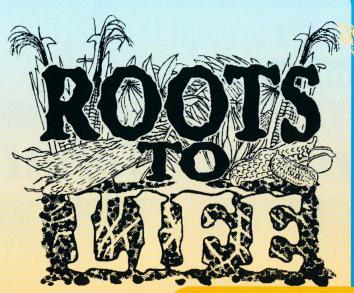
A minister with an educational background is being sought for this long-term commitment. A good working knowledge of the local language and a desire to build good long-term relationships are desirable. Among the aims of the post is to help formulate a broad-based Christian education policy with an emphasis on the call of God for church leadership.

Andrew North 01235 512077

If you are hearing the call of God to serve, please speak with Andrew North, the BMS Missionaries Support Manager on (01235) 512077.







When the crops keep failing and growers get discouraged they need someone to help. Here in Trapiá, Mike and Daveen Wilson have been helping to give the village hope for the future. Your support can make a difference.

Operation Agri supports projects like this and Telema project in Zaire, which BMS agriculturalist David Stockley has visited and helped.

Both these projects provide a focus for Roots to Life.



Mike Wilson and daughter Debbie, examine crops in Trapiá, Brazil.

Don't miss out on your resources pack!

- Full of ideas
- Packed with information
- A great resource for your harvest activities



Operation AGRI BMM & Baptist Missionary Society joint harvest appeal



There's no place like home, whether it's going to be in Kingston-upon-Thames, Kathmandu, Karachi or

Kinshasa. But if home is to be in another country, the additional challenges facing families are not only cultural adaptation but also where the children go to school.

This has been one over which many have agonised; God's call on their lives to mission overseas seems to conflict with what is normally thought to be "best for the children".

Some choose boarding schools, some home education and others are able to send the children to mission tutor groups. But no matter how much they have thought and prayed, during low moments doubt and uncertainty can lead to the inevitable question: "Did we get it right?"

There is no doubt that both parents and children need our continued prayer support so we have invited some who were "mish kids", as they're affectionately known, and a missionary teacher, to share their thoughts and reflections with the aim of better equipping us for prayer support to those in their shoes today.

Richard Wells

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Cover story
(NO PLACE FOR A FAREWELL)
What was behind the "mish kid" stiff upper lip $oldsymbol{4}$
Steve Chalke
(BOYS WILL BE BOYS)
Are missionary children any different? 9
News section
(FOREIGN AND HOME NEWS)
Taking a look at the news from a global perspective 10
Centre special
SCHOOL FOR CHAMPIONS
Educating the unsung heroes of the mission field18
Country focus
mb LOOKS AT NEPAL
Jan Kendall's regular national overview 21
Mission file
(IDEAS AND OPINIONS)
Facts, figures and background resource material 26
Personal prayer
(WHO AND WHAT TO PRAY FOR)
News from the BMS 28:19 Action Teams 28
Prayer points from BMS colleagues around the world. ${f 30}$
John Passmore
A SIDEWAYS LOOK
Almost the last word
Waves
(AN INDEPENDENT VIEW)
Andrew Green is this month's guest writer 35

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

(YOUTH . . . AND MISSION)

Do we trust our young people with the gospel?

(FOCUS ON THAILAND)

Where Christians live in a strong Buddhist culture

FRONT COVER: School for these two young street children from India is
Calcutta's Emmanuel School, run by the Christian organisation Emmanuel
Ministries.

Picture: Richard Wells

No placewhen my parents
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WHILE PARENTS WERE ON THE MISSION FIELD, SCHOOL BECAME A LONELY PLACE TO MASTER THE ART OF PRETENCE.

ANDREW GREEN REFLECTS ON HIS FORMATIVE YEARS

oys at Eltham College do not cry," said my housemaster reproachfully, just in case I was tempted to indulge in such unmanliness. As though it were yesterday, I remember the autumn darkness and the soulful strains of the school organ – as melancholy as the season. I was 10, I had just said goodbye to my mum and I knew I wouldn't see her again for four more years. What frustrated me and it sounds so pathetic now – is that in front of all my friends, I could say no proper farewell. We were marched out of chapel in crocodile, with no space to express the sense of emptiness and abandonment, no time for tenderness. I filed past my mother with stinging eyes.

A week later my school cap was pinched (which dates me!) and in the ensuing fight a few punches were thrown. For me this was a significant first bloodying into the trivial brutality of an English public school – a rite of passage others thought I passed with flying colours. The macho persona was not difficult to adopt: fortunately from then on, most of the aggression was channelled into rugby. Without having to think about it, I became a master of pretence. My new identity was thoroughly pagan and largely unfeeling. Chameleon like, I had changed to match the surroundings.

Missionary kids are not unique in their development; many other children miss out on what is called "normal" family life. Like many others today there is no fully developed parent-child relationship.

So, for example, when my parents returned despite their faithfulness in letters and audio-tapes, we were comparative strangers! Moreover, as my son grows up, I find I have no model in adolescence of a father-son

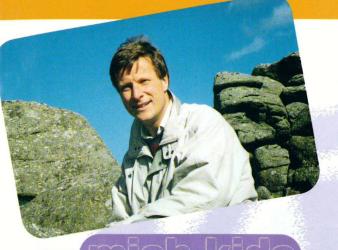
relationship. Deep down there is a sadness, which my parents must also feel, of a childhood irrevocably lost!

But these are just scars on the surface; there is a deeper damage. I have a horror of being left and having to say farewell. Even now I feel it hard to say goodbye to the children!

More seriously, there was an emotional repression. Like many others at the age of 10, I had to act as though my parents were dead, but no one recognised it as a form of bereavement. My coping mechanism was a sort of emotional shutdown: "I didn't feel, I didn't care". I had the belief that if you block out all pain and grit your teeth you will get through. I had no expectation of actually enjoying myself; my only aim was to survive! A generation later my children have had a carefree innocence, but for many "mish kids" there is a neurosis planted with those first hints of separation.

All this is in retrospect. As a young adult I was convinced that my "mish kid" experience was entirely





mish kids

I had the belief that if you block out all pain and grit your teeth you will get through. I had no expectation of actually enjoying myself; my only aim was to survive!

positive: I had had the advantage of world travel and a global perspective on life. My parents' love for me and their prayers formed a certain foundation. I had the advantage of a good education, and despite the school, became a Christian in the sixth form.

It was only after university, and heading for Christian ministry, that I had an unexpected insight. I was on holiday and bumped into a 17-year-old whose parents were missionaries with the OMF.

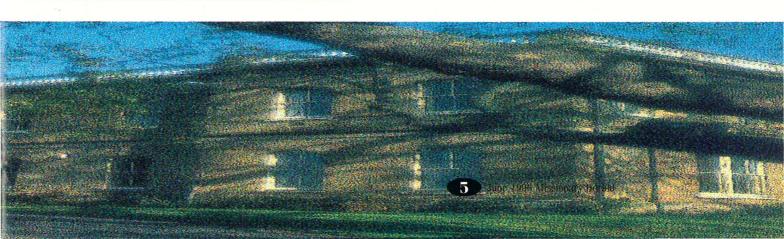
Like me he was mad on rugby and like me he seemed so full of confidence. He had all the advantages of knowledge and charm that come from such an education. But suddenly, I saw that in him it was all a mask. Underneath all the bravado there was a very vulnerable little boy.

For the first time in a decade I wept and wept. Uncontrollably the tears flowed.

For I suddenly realised this was me!



Andrew Green (TOP) minister at Upton Vale Baptist Church, Torquay; as a youngster (ABOVE) with his family; Eltham College (BELOW) and actor lan Charleston, who played the role of Eltham's most famous student, Eric Liddell, in the film Chariots of Fire



Heart

EVEN AT SCHOOL 'MISH KID' ANDY KENNEDY WANTED TO BE A MISSIONARY. HERE HE TELLS HOW THINGS WORKED OUT

s I look back on 14 years in full time youth work, I realise that I have always seen myself as a missionary. My twin brother, Douglas, myself and both my sisters, Alison and Jennifer, were born in Zaire. Mum and Dad had gone there in 1956 to teach and do tropical medicine with the BMS.

Being a "mish kid" - and a twin has certainly added much colour to life and Africa, in particular, has been a challenging backdrop with which to grow up.

It is often hard to know with early childhood memories, how much is genuine recall and how much is family retell around the tea table. The truth is probably somewhere in the middle.

I do remember Dad waking us up for 12 consecutive mornings to give us rabies injections through the stomach; our pet monkey getting swallowed by a snake one night; the house being invaded by an army of soldier ants and my Dad and another missionary blowtorching them out!

I also remember playing in the local creek, wearing my unfashionable red trunks and the daily need to take "jiggers" out of toes with sterilised safety pins.

Seemingly, I could speak four languages by the time I was five – English, French, Lingala and Dutch. When we returned to Scotland and settled in Aberdeen, our primary school teacher could get only a "Ja" out of us for a while!

Boarding school life figures high in the lives of many "mish kids" worldwide. Many experience enormous struggles as a result. I think eightyear-old Andy wanted to be a missionary on the field instead of at Eltham College, south-west London.

One of my first letters - which my parents have to this day - went like this:

"Dear Mummy and Daddy, My name is Andrew Kennedy. I am eight years old. I will be in this school until I am 18. Where will you be then?"

We were at Eltham College for three to four years and saw our parents for only one glorious summer.

But it was fun, too! Our aunts and uncles became close guardians, read

report cards and helped us to record messages on reel-to-reel tapes for sending to Africa.

> I feel my parents were wise to reunited us all in Glasgow just before we hit adolescence. Douglas and I were 12, Alison 13 and Jennifer eight. Our home became meeting

many young people from Queen's Park Baptist Church. Mum and Dad were amazing examples to us of hospitality and patience. For many a year on Sunday there

place for

would be 15 or 20 people at a meal time; Mum's chicken casserole always seemed to stretch to any amount!

My teenage years were busy; rugby, Crusaders (where I made my first real commitment to follow Jesus), youth fellowship, more rugby! Summer camps figured high during these years and I learned a lot about caring for urban kids through Scripture Union camps led by men like the Revd Jim Punton and Bob Johnston. This soon



Andy Kennedy: a fulfilling life in mission to young people

led to the setting up of Frontier Youth Trust in Scotland and, again, I learned much from being involved with this ministry.

The rest of the summers seem to have been spent running what my church called the "summer mission" which reached out to local families and children. It was during this time that many youth in the church were released into creative evangelism. It is significant that the pastor, himself, had been a missionary in Brazil.

Now I am the leader of the UK and Ireland ministry of King's Kids and regularly address young people on the subject of "Destiny". I have a strong conviction that God has a very special purpose for their generation, particularly in the area of world mission and getting the good news to all nations.

I feel so privileged to work with children, youth and families through the King's Kids ministry of Youth With A Mission (YWAM). God has given me a heart to see them empowered and mobilised. We actually – and prayerfully, I might add – take 10-year-olds on mission, whereas most missions start at 16.

Since being with King's Kids full time for five years, I have been privileged to visit 25 nations. Next month, in Atlanta, USA, about 7,000 King's Kids from over 100 nations will gather in celebration prior to outreach to all the Americas. I shall be leading a team of excellent young people to Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. ●

Prayer Points

- Wisdom in prioritising projects.
- Recruiting anointed staff to develop these projects.
- Strength as I travel frequently.
- Relationship with Queen's Park Baptist, my sending church, to be kept strong.

Andy Kennedy is full time leader of Youth With A Mission's King's Kids ministry

At home in a Class of

A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO SCHOOLING FOR MISSIONARIES' CHILDREN. CORINNA WOODS PROVIDES A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

n earlier generations missionaries called to serve in remote places often sent their young children to boarding schools or home to Britain.

In response to the feelings expressed by many of these now adult children - that they had been sacrificed on the altar of their parents' service the happier alternative of bringing a teacher to the families has grown up within the United Mission to Nepal (UMN). This teacher was to be a full missionary member of the team with a crucial role to play in enabling parents' work to continue.

My work in Jumla started with the creation of a school room in a mudfloored Nepali house. I air-freighted some cheap lino from Kathmandu, collected suitable locally-made furniture, invented ways of displaying children's work on walls plastered with mud and unpacked books and supplies I had brought from England.

We had no photocopier, no television or video, and no computer. But as it is important that the pupils can at any time return to their own countries and fit into mainstream education, it was important that course books, reading materials and equipment were up to date and of high quality.

There are great delights in teaching in such a shcool. With numbers never exceeding eight, each pupil becomes an individual young friend whose needs can be monitored day by day and who can make real academic progress.

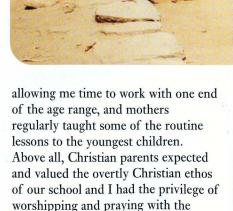
There is always "time" and one is not constrained by the more irritating aspects of imposed curriculum. There is daily contact with parents who also become a vital resource in filling gaps in the curriculum, for no teacher can be expert at everything nor aspire to be superwoman while living in a place like Jumla, where survival at a purely physical level is difficult.

I found that work which was unfinished when the sun dipped behind the mountains and the evening chill set in, had to be left so that I could spend my evenings cooking on my wood stove and doing chores around the home.

We were glad to enjoy the advantages of PE with parents,

In answer to my prayers about the direction of my life and teaching career, I found myself accepted by the BMS Candidate Board and en route to Jumla in the mountains of west Nepal. There I was to be the tutorial

group teacher responsible for the primary education of a group of children whose parents were missionaries teaching in and supporting the work of Karnali **Technical School, training young** Nepalis for various aspects of development work in their local communities. That was in October 1990. •



children each morning. Of course, there were times when difficulties arose. Some were minor

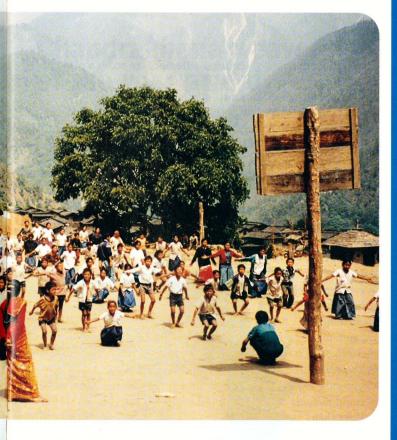
problems, like disposing of dead rats; finding the schoolroom infested with pigeon mites, causing us to scratch and wriggle as if we had St Vitus' dance; or arriving back from a break to find every surface and book generously crusted with mud after the installation of a new stovepipe.

Other problems arise from parents' varying expectations of the educational process and their wish to influence the curriulum to meet their own aspirations, both personal and based on differing national systems.

It is helpful to be an experienced and confident teacher, able to reassure parents and justify one's methods, but these situations can be stressful when there is no professional support, when there is no telephone to make possible a chat with a colleague, and when your friends are also your school parents.

Most missionaries are confident, competent professional people – they need to be to live in often quite hostile environments – and most of them recognise that their teacher is just the same, and with them in Nepal as an equal partner seeking to serve in the name and Spirit of Jesus Christ.

I look back on many joys; watching small children take their



first steps into literacy; delighting in the poetry that the children have created; watching school performances with nervous young actors and musicians entertaining proud parents. But mostly it has been recognising the privilege of spending the past four years in Nepal, knowing this was where God had called me and that my work has been part of UMN's effort to bring the light of the gospel of Jesus and his love into the lives of the people of Jumla, some of the world's most backward and needy people.

Corinna Woods is a BMS missionary working with the United Mission to Nepal. She has been seconded to the staff of a new Sixth Form in Dullu, in western Nepal



My wife, Cornelia, was once interviewed as part of a seminar designed to support the partners of Christian leaders, called Living With Leadership.

"Isn't it tough living with a Christian leader?" she was asked.

"I don't live with a Christian leader," she replied, "I live with Steve." After almost 16 years of marriage, Cornelia is under no illusions - my workaholic tendencies and other irritating habits are not the result of my being a "professional Christian". They're all part of me! I would have been just as easy or difficult to live with if I had become a journalist, a bank manager or a plumber.

Missionary Kids (MKs) are, at heart, no different from any others. They have exactly the same needs for their parents' love and attention, the same problems with learning, and the same confusion about discovering who they are and what their place is in society. Every job has its own specific set of pressures and opportunities. We're looking in the wrong place if we try to see "being a missionary" as anything more than a convenient peg on which to hang excuses. The task of parenting is a tough one, no matter who you

The problems experienced by missionary families in Northern Italy, for example, are very different from those experiences by their counterparts in Zaire. In fact, they may well discover that they have more in common with the families of journalists or business people working in the same country than with other missionaries working elsewhere in the world.

At the end of the day, missionaries are faced with the same questions as the rest of us when it comes to their children; am I a good parent or not? Where abouts do my children come in my list of priorities? Because the truth is, every mission field starts at home.

In my own work, I've found that it's easy to go to the ends of the earth with the good news about Jesus, but it's much harder to go home, where they know what I'm really like. Good relationships with your children don't just happen. They have to be carefully built up and constantly worked at. And the more your profession (whatever that might be), takes you away from your children, the harder you have to work at being a parent. The mistakes I make as a father are not the inevitable result of my being a Baptist minister. No matter how hard I've had to work during the day, I know that when I get home I can't afford just to relax. I have to work just as hard at being a dad as I do at anything else.

But don't mistake my words for gloom and despondency. I love being a father. If the responsibility of parenthood is enormous, so too are the opportunities. It's just that Missionary Kids (and Preacher's Kids, or PKs) aren't a breed apart. Like all other children, what they need most is the love, support, understanding and, above all, time of their parents. And like all other children, they need to be treated and respected as individuals.

The task of every parent is to prepare their children for independent living. Childhood is gone in a second, and it's every parent's primary task to establish good foundations on which their children can build the strong moral, spiritual and emotional framework they will need to get the best out

Steve Chalke is General Director of the Oasis Trust

Childhood's dream...

JOY MELLOR HAD THE FREEDOM OF A FAMOUS FIVE TOMBOY LIFE IN THE AFRICAN JUNGLE BUT FACED A CHALLENGE OF ACCEPTANCE BY OTHERS

ou could say that mine was every child's dream childhood. It sounds such an adventure - born in an African village, speaking that language before English and having solely African friends for eight years.

Exploring forest tracks, escaping crocodiles and water snakes, swimming endlessly in the lake, canoeing, fishing, making camps . . .

Adventure, it was.

No girl could help but become a tomboy - and I was a strictly Famous Five and Nancy Drew girl!

However, growing up is not just about having plenty to do. It is also about mixing with people and getting on with them. This is where things grew tricky.

People who had not experienced the missionary life would respond in many ways but all of them felt you were something out of the ordinary - a little strange and to be treated with care.

The Africans gave me a Zairian name; I spent most of my first years with Africans so of course they were quite used to me. But I was white, with parents from the "great rich west". For this reason, I never did reach a feeling of oneness with any Zairian friend: I was privileged and they would never forget that.

In Britain people equally did not really know what living a missionary family's life was like. However, here I was looked on as somehow abnormally spiritual and uncomfortably poor. Instead of being put on an impossible pedestal of wealth and status, I seemed to find myself ushered into a little zoo cage and observed slightly warily, occasionally called upon to perform by teaching a little song in the African language or by giving a little talk about something spiritual.

Probably my most socially comfortable time was when I went to school in the Zairian capital, Kinshasa. I lived in an almost entirely expatriate community and went to an American expatriate school with people of such varied backgrounds that no one person could possibly stand out as being odder than anyone else. Everybody was just different and accepted as

Growing up a "mish kid", I learned through a few, admittedly, hard experiences that, on the whole, other people's opinions of me do not matter. Instead, I have grown up to really enjoy people and I feel that overcoming – or overlooking! –

cultural differences to reach a plane of friendship and acceptance is one of the most fulfilling aspects of life.

The missionary child's life was not an easy one but it opened up a whole world of enriching and good experiences.

Joy Mellor is the daughter of John and Rena Mellor, BMS missionaries in Zaire







Chandraghona weaver of the year award

Chandraghona Christian Hospital lies in the foothills of the Chittagong Tracts, in Bangladesh and close to the borders of India and Burma. It is the base for an income-generating weaving project. Financed initially by Operation Agri, the weaving centre is now fully self sufficient and employs 26 women from various local tribes. All the women are divorced, abandoned or at risk in the community.

Working on 10 looms and ten spinning wheels, the ladies produce cotton fabrics of a high quality and in a variety of colours and designs as well as creating ready-made clothes in the tailoring centre. Other items such as hand embroidered table cloths, napkins, tribal bags and woollen shawls are also available.

The profits the women make from the sale of their goods enables them to provide a well-balanced diet for their families. This results in fewer health problems and so acts as a successful community health project in its own right. Also linked to the project are literacy classes and a savings scheme enabling these women to take control of their own lives once more.

Nurse and BMS missionary Sue Headlam trains nurses and oversees the community health programme at Chandraghona Hospital. She says of the weaving project: "It has been a joy to see the women develop as people and, with the security of a job, return to being useful members of society."

Each year the project holds a ceremony to honour the best weaver and the best spinner of the year. The winners must not only be proficient in their work but must be regular attenders at the project and must display a pleasant and pleasing personality. Nancy Benham who runs the Chittagong sales outlet for the project was invited as guest

of honour to present the awards for 1995 and following the presentation, the weavers put on a small variety show including songs, dancing and a take-off of the foreign visitors!

Viva Network World Day of Prayer

FOR CHILDREN AT HIGH RISK SATURDAY 1 JUNE 1996

The Viva Network is a young initiative aiming to create a channel for sharing resources, information and ideas between the world-wide Christian agencies involved in outreach to children at risk, especially street children.

BMS is sharing in the Viva Network's call to prayer for these children on June 1 and encourages all Baptist churches to lend their support to this day.

- By the year 2000, half of the population of the world will be children, two billion of these will live in extreme poverty or at risk.
- •Today, 100 million street children roam the world's cities; the figure is set to rise to 800 million by 2020.
- Every year, one million children enter or are sold into child prostitution
- •By the year 2000, 10 million children will be orphaned as a result of AIDS worldwide. A greater number will be orphaned by civil war.
- •Death squads kill thousands of children every year in several Latin American countries. As a result, whole communities of children have sprung up in the sewers of Manaus and Bogota.

(Figures drawn from the Viva Network's statement of purpose)

You can join with more than 20,000 people across the globe who have already committed themselves to pray for vision of the way forward in the battle for children at risk. Viva will supply all prayer partners with free publicity material, a structured timetable for the day with suggestions for leaders and information on events being held around the world for the day of prayer. Please encourage as many people as possible to pray on June 1.

For further information contact: The Viva Network, PO Box 633. Oxford, OX4 2ED. Tel: 01865 773704

Please note: this day of prayer does not fall under the auspices of the World Day of Prayer organisation.





ohn James has a passion for God's Kingdom. There is not a lot that excites him more than to see professions of faith after the gospel has been preached. A hallmark of his ministry has been the steady stream of people into the Kingdom of God through commitments to Jesus Christ made where he has preached.

In fact, he can remember that on the Sunday he preached "with a view" before becoming pastor at Penarth Baptist Tabernacle in 1982, two men found salvation. It was a sign that leaders at the church had been seeking as God's indication of his chosen man for the job. And that set the pattern for John's ministry there.

"There aren't many Sundays go by when we don't see some response," reflects John. "And we normally baptise about once every six or eight weeks. It's been a story of phenomenal growth, evangelism growth."

An average outsider might be forgiven for concluding that John has a kind of spiritual "Midas touch" when it comes to getting people into God's Kingdom; not an unreasonable conclusion to draw, considering the growth in numbers at Penarth – from 80 to 440 in 14 years – but with humility and a gentle enthusiastic smile John will always point to God as the source of his gifting and calling.

It is with the same enthusiasm that John talks animatedly of God as one who is full of surprises. Ask him about the

recent trip he made for the BMS to Sri Lanka, India and Nepal, where he led a missionaries' retreat in Kathmandu, and John will smile and relate in his gentle Welsh lilt, a series of supernatural interventions by God that are as breathtaking as they are surprising.

One of them happened in Sri Lanka, a land that has long had a place in John's heart; a friendship developed during the BMS bicentenary celebrations between John and Paul Koralage the president of the country's Baptist Sangamaya. Paul's daughter, Naomi, studying in Wales, has become part of the James family, sharing home with John and his wife, Tricia.

So it was not surprising to find John as a guest speaker at the Sangamaya half-yearly meeting in Colombo and leading a mission to further flung territory in Sri Lanka. "They asked me if I'd preach evangelistically at the Sangamaya meeting and so it was thrilling to see 24 profess faith for the first time and another dozen come forward publicly for baptism. During the two weeks I spent in Sri Lanka, we saw about 150 people profess faith."

If this wasn't encouragement enough for Baptist leaders praying for a new wave of God's Spirit through the nation, John says God burdened him with a series of messages on revival to give at a ministers' retreat in the beautiful Sri Lankan hill country. "A fire for revival was ignited in the

hearts of everyone there," says John. "And ministers and their wives were agonising with God as never before anywhere and when we left, we knew that something had happened."

This was to set the pattern for the remainder of his visit, a few days which were to be the most surprising.

Out of the city, in the rural villages and mountainous terrain are Baptist out-stations - small congregations planted by Baptist churches. Travel for the visiting evangelist can mean several hours squeezed into a minibus covering roads whose surfaces have not encountered a tarmacadam vehicle in 30 years, which combine to create a memorably slow journey that does its utmost to rearrange the body's vital organs.

Then he has to preach.

It was after just such a journey to Aglawatta, south of Colombo, that events took so dramatic a turn that John's memory of them is an indelible lithograph of dynamic spiritual activity. John had just addressed a meeting of about 20 church leaders when one of them, Pastor Imal who had planted five congregations in a year, called everyone to prayer.

John says: "They prayed with one voice, and I had a picture of them laying down a platform between earth and heaven which God in his sovereignty could come and move. And there was a prophetic word that there was power in that region to heal.

"I've never been to a prayer meeting like it; they all prayed and I saw the children agonising with God for him to come down!"

Later, a few muscle-toning kilometres further into Sri Lanka's Tamil hill country, and in a small crowded rubber plantation cottage in which a recently-planted church held its meetings, John began to see results. It was a simple children's story, mainly for the benefit of the 20 youngsters, but as soon as John had spoken, 12 people made commitments to Christ.

"Then I preached," says John. "There was great power in that meeting. When I'd finished, they sat me down, cleared a chair alongside me and one by one people came with the expectation that God was going to heal them.

"The first to come was a father with a little girl who hopped in. The interpreter told me she had palsy; her little hand was deformed and as we prayed in Jesus' name her hand took on normal shape and form. I find it almost unbelievable; they just shouted 'It's a miracle!'.

"Then her father said 'What about her leg?' So I told her to walk – and I was so moved, because she walked. Then they ran out shouting 'It's a miracle!' and there was a rush into that cottage like I've never seen! Everyone wanted miracles.

"For four hours everyone who came was

John reflected: "I don't have a history of this kind of ministry but God did it! And I can't stop blinking - that small prophetic word at that prayer meeting in the afternoon was what God did for four hours!"

But this happened not only once; John experienced God's healing miracles again in Gonawalla, another village where he was invited to minister.

"I can't understand it," says John. "But I really do give glory to God."

It is significant that John's visit should have been sponsored by the BMS. Sri Lankan Baptists are proud of their BMS roots – a difficult start by James Chater in 1812, admittedly, but one that grew under his successor, Ebenezer Daniel, until at his death in 1844 the BMS had started 40 schools, 10 mission stations and almost 100 preaching centres.

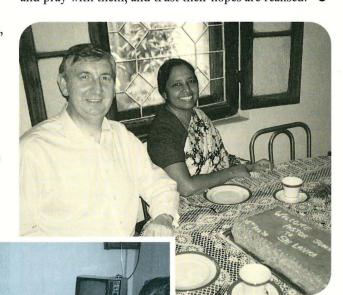
However, stagnation set in. One of the reasons, says BMS historian Brian Stanley, was a lack of provision for training pastors and evangelists.

Baptist Sangamaya leaders today admit that similar circumstances beset their small community. But while they struggle to cope in these circumstances, making the most of visiting preachers from abroad, they remain expectant on the threshold of revival.

Paul Koralage, and the Sangamaya's general secretary, Nihal Pereira – both relatively recent incumbents – will have gained great encouragement from John's visit and are grateful to the BMS for making it possible.

It is, perhaps, a measure of their expectation of greater church growth, into which they have invested so much prayer, that they have invited John to return to lead a mission.

Says John: "They're really on fire. They want to build on that which they've seen God doing. Sri Lanka doesn't have a history of revivals or of great church growth, but they feel they're on the verge of something great and we must stand and pray with them, and trust their hopes are realised."



ABOVE: John James receives a welcome from Kanthi Koralage

LEFT: Power to heal - John prays in Jesus' name for one of the villagers at Aglawatte

Foreign News in brief

HAITI: Churches are busy contacting new **Christians following a dramatic response** to a Bible distribution programme. More than 1.100 commitments to Christ were recorded in three weeks when a visiting **Youth With A Mission team helped take** Creole versions of the Bible door-to-door in Terre Noire. Now church members aim to make a follow-up visit to every person who made a commitment during the outreach. (YWAM News)

EUROPE: Two new international churches have been accepted into membership of the European Baptist Convention (EBC) by its general committee. The addition of a church in Sofia, Bulgaria, where Baptists and other evangelicals have experienced persecution through the media and by local authorities, and another in Prague, Czech Republic, brings the total number of EBC-related churches to 66 in 21 countries. The two new churches were established last November. (EBPS)

ZAMBIA: After several unsuccessful attempts to relocate the All Africa Baptist Fellowship (AABF), general secretary Eleazar Ziherambere has gained legal status in Lusaka where he will establish the AABF office and a home for his family. Mr Ziherambere and his family had to flee Rwanda, headquarters of the AABF, two years ago when genocide began. They set up a temporary home in Kenya while one of the worst examples of ethnic cleansing this century raged in Rwanda. (EBPS)

BULGARIA: Further evidence of persecution against Christians has emerged in the refusal by Sofia airport police to allow James Duke, pastor of the city's International Baptist Church, to fly to a pastors' meeting in Germany. **Evangelicals in Bulgaria continue to be** the victims of malicious national media accusations of drug smuggling and destruction of the nation's culture, and the Bulgarian Evangelical Alliance has appealed for support from the World **Council of Churches and the Conference** of European Churches in its campaign for fair treatment. (EBPS)

Baptists aid school for **AIDS** children



Help for one of the **House of Refuge** school children

A home for abandoned children dying from AIDS has opened its own school because the youngsters have been barred from classes elsewhere. Local Baptists are paying to employ a teacher and provide classroom supplies.

Three five and six-yearolds are currently having lessons in the school founded at the House of Refuge in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, where HIV-infected street-children and their babies are taken in and cared for by Youth With A Mission workers.

The house was opened three years ago to care for street children who contract AIDS through sex or drug abuse. A growing number of Brazil's estimated six million homeless children are believed to be carrying the HIV virus.

Moves to set up the school with the help of the Baptist church in the locality came after children from the refuge were turned away from other schools.

Jeanette Lukasse, who with her husband Johann directs YWAM's street children ministry, said: "The teachers told us they couldn't accept them. One teacher, a mother herself, said she would take her own kids out of school if we sent ours.

"The heads begged us not to send our children because they feared many more parents would keep their children away."

If the children remain

well, the House of Refuge school will grow with them. However, since the house was opened nione children have died, most recently an 18-month-old baby.

Oil of joy for Georgia

When the European Baptist Women's Union (EBWU) presented its Cooking Oil for Georgia project last September it was received with scepticism by European Baptist Federation Council members.

Few thought that a collection of the equivalent of a bottle of cooking oil from women would pay for an expensive oil press for Baptist farmers in the impoverished Republic of Georgia.

Today, in Tsnori, East Georgia, a new DM31,000 oil press waits to be commissioned, confounding the sceptics.

What is more, the money is still coming in, says EBWU president Hilda Sayers, who lives in Brighton, Sussex.

"Little did we know how God would touch people's hearts with this project," she says. "In less than four months the money came together and we could purchase the oil press."

The German Baptist Union organised the transport in April and the Co-operative Baptist Fellowship will pick up the transport bill, as well as pay for a generator to run the press. It will not only provide oil for kitchens but create jobs and contribute towards pastors' salaries.

Hilda estimates that about DM4,000 has built up in the EBWU oil press German account since the equipment was bought and there is £3,700 (about DM8,200) in the British account. This money is expected to help farmers set up a factory for the oil press and buy seed so that they can extract oil; production should start in the summer.

The economic climate in the new Republic of Georgia, a former state of the USSR, is poor, yet the Baptist church there has grown in the past six years from 2,000 to 4,500 members. But the nation has had no fuel for heating, poor electricity supplies and 80 per cent unemployment.

A typical monthly pension of DM6 (about £2.75) will buy only 10 loaves of bread or just one small chicken

Hilda, who for the past 18 months has spent long periods living in Tbilisi, Georgia, speaks of a gruelling lifestyle. "Life is hard in many countries these days, yet it seems that Georgia is one of the hardest hit."

Update

Care of a carver

Joyti is a quiet little Nepali girl with a seriousness in her eyes that is quite out of keeping with her age. But then she has seen more suffering in her six years than many of us in the West will see in a lifetime. Today, Joyti is fit and well and is cared for by her adopting family. For Sitaram and his wife, to take Joyti in has not been without its cost. Joyti is now old enough to go to shoool and this is one pressure on him. Sitaram works hard to feed his family and this is yet another pressure on him. He is an ex-leprosy patient and has learned to carve wood. He works in a little cooperative with three other such patients in the western Nepal town of Butwal. They make crosses, candle holders and bread boards, all beautifully crafted.

A couple of months ago he came to our house with a handful of iron pieces; the co-operative chisels. Half were broken beyond repair. Now, if there are no chisels there can be no carving and with carving there is no money and no food. Those little pieces of metal were vital to Sitaram and his family. He had tried to get others in Butwal but the steel was not good enough. "Could your factory make us some chisels?"

"I'll see what can be done."

The factory blacksmith was very helpful and very willing to oblige but then he saw the chisels.

"I am sorry they are too small. I can make you bigger ones." By now it was lunch time. We were all depressed. Wood carving had given Sitaram the ability to feed his family had given him back his self respect. If those broken chisels could not be replaced his only hope would have been to go back to the old life of begging. If it is lunch time in Nepal it is breakfast time in Britain and if we did not know what to do next there was one avenue open to us in Britain. I got to a phone and rang Jack Norwood, of Tools with a Mission. "Could TWAM send the chisels for wood carving?"

"Yes we can; how many do you want?"

It took two months for those chisels to arrive. The mixture of joy and relief in the woodcarver's faces is hard to express. Old tools given by their Christian brothers and sisters in Britain had given them new hope and confidence.

The story hasn't ended. Joyti still needs to go to school. For that little girl's education the woodcarvers will have sell 600 more pieces a year. It is not impossible but the market in Kathmandu is nearly saturated. We are praying that other markets will open up for them.

Bob Ellett



Harry makes it count

Harry Fisher made his 90th birthday really count for world mission. Instead of birthday presents, Harry, a member of Brighton Road Baptist Church, Horsham, for 72 years asked for gifts to be made to BMS - and more than £200 was given. At a party attended by 60 friends and family, his 12 greatgrandchildren, the youngest of whom is pictured with him, were there to celebrate with him.

Breakthrough at Bilston

The South Staffs District of the West Midlands Baptist Association took a step forward in its world mission activities by holding a BMS Prayer Concert at Bilston. About 90 people from many churches came together to worship, learn more about overseas mission in Nepal and Brazil, and to pray for their linked missionaries. Leslie Gregory, retired South-West region co-ordinator, and Theo Lambourne, Midlands co-ordinator, led the meeting and the music group Out of Darkness from Green Lane, Walsall, helped with the worship.

Splinters

Baptists in Barrow-in-Furness have formed a mission "splinter group". But this is no rebellion. Supporters of the BMS at Abbey Road Baptist Church in Barrow, Cumbria, are boosting their gifts to world mission through Splinter Giving saving 1p and 5p coins, which they have nicknamed

"splinters". And, as Laurie Whatley points out, everyone needs to get rid of splinters. People tend to be disdainful

of small change, he says, so Abbey Road members are grasping the opportunity to put it to work for God making small change bring big change.

Slurp on...

Following the Big Slurp, the Christian Aid initiative in February to promote fairly traded tea and coffee, St Andrew's Street Baptist Church, Cambridge, has relaunched its coffee shop, Livingstones, in the city centre. It is offering a choice of Faritrade Foundationapproved tea and coffee to drink on the premises or to take away. "Now you can have one big slurp day after day," says spokesman Kay Fenton.

Reunited

A Zaire reunion, organised by former BMS missionary Ruth Montacute at Egerton-Rothesay School, in Berkhamsted, Herts, attracted 189 visitors. Most had worked in Zaire either with the BMS or with British companies. Among those attending were the BMS 1995/6 President David Wilson and the 1996/7 President Carolyn Green, and Olive Woodham and Elizabeth Waters, past heads of the Zaire British Association School. Ruth.

Dates for your diary

Presidential Tour On June 1 BMS President Carolyn Green will be in the Oxfordshire

and East Gloucester Association and the Eastern Area. At the Cutting Edge – A Celebration is on June 29 at Avenue

Details: Jim Clarke, BMS Presidential Tour Co-ordinator These events give an opportunity to hear about BMS TODAY – a Baptist Church, Southend. world mission vision as we approach 2000, prayer needs, people needs, money needs.

Northern Association Family Day Details: Margaret Barnett 01207 504023

Pembrokeshire Association Women's Event at Letterston Details: Anna Williams 01239 820433

Rochdale BMS Event 15 June

Details: John Smithles 01706 48989

Joint BMS/Home Mission Secretaries Training Day, Sheffield Road,

Details: Cath Mawson 01274 487341

Shropshire Missionary Council Summer Event, Bridgnorth Details: Clive Challinor 01743 790377

BMS presentations and workshops at Southern Assn. June 7, East Midlands Assn. June 8, West Mindlands Assn. June 22.

Mission Li

who was head at the British school from 1978 until it closed in 1993, is now head of lower school at Egerton-Rothesay.

Researching

Author Joy Piper is researching a book on overseas mission aimed at inspiring church interest. Joy, of 183 Station Road, Crayfor, Kent, DA1 3QE, wants to hear from any who undertook short-term service overseas or who have visited missionaries abroad to help with a section covering the impact of cross-cultural experiences on people's understanding of mission.

Meet the Missionary

by Corinna Woods

"So you're the new missionary, are you? Well, they're all yours." This was the greeting I received in just one of the schools I've visited in Yorkshire, Humberside, Hampshire and Kent during Home Assignment.

Most schools know nothing about me, were curious, but had little understanding of the role of a missionary in today's world. My programme consisted of an assembly tailored to ages four to 11, in which I was able to include a little geography and slides explaining the life of people in the village of Jumla, Nepal, where I've lived for three and a half years, through the story of a little blind girl who was my neighbour. I've shown pictures of animistic

worship and talked of the freedom from fear that comes from knowing Jesus. Assembly was usually followed during the remainder of the school day with classes or year groups for whom I dressed up in my very primitive women's clothes adding more information and answering children's

endless

thoughtful questions.

"How do people know there are evil spirits?" came up over and over again, and I was able to talk of actual events that I had witnessed or been involved in when the power of Jesus was seen to be greater than local forces. There was never a need to curtail planned sessions, in fact the clock normally beat us and then it was time to be with interested staff, chatting over coffee with many who really wanted to know more, or who admitted that they had not found a way to respond to similar calls to serve overseas.

Women in Jumla wearing the sort of clothes in which I dressed in schools.

If I've done no more than dispel the outdated, unhelpful ideas that go with the word "missionary", it will have been worthwhile, but it's been far more: an opportunity to speak about Jesus to hundreds of children. I came away from many schools with positive invitations to return next home leave -Praise God! – and thanks to the missionary secretaries who arranged these opportunities. It's been a real "missionary" assignment.

There are lots of letters from the children at St Peter's Junior School, Broadstairs, Kent. Here is one retyped:

Dear Mrs Wood

Thank you for coming to our school. I had a fantastic time. It was sad, fun and exciting. I hope you come and visit again, perhaps one day you can take me there. The bits that I found interesting was the clothes and the jewellery and the pictures. The bit I thought was sad is the bit where you said if you want to get meat you have to chop off the goat's head and where you said you have to mix cow pat with water and mud. I thought that was sick. And where you have to buy sugar all dirty and oily. I felt really sorry for that girl who was blind because of the smoke. I don't like the idea of going to the loo in the water.

I have just become the Missionary Secretary of our Baptist Dear Audrey... Church. We are linked to missionaries in Africa but don't have any information on them. It is very difficult to get people enthused without any photograph or news. All churches in a Link-Up group receive a photograph of

their Link-Up missionary, information about them and a certificate to say they are linked. If we can get missionaries to stand still long enough we also take fresh photographs for the churches every time they are on Home Assignment. We'd be delighted to send you one. News of your missionary comes in their prayer or news letters, which you should

I'm sure you must have sent information to churches receive three times a year. about World Mission Link but we don't seem to have

There's a new information booklet on World Mission Link. received any.

Copies have been sent to ministers and mission secretaries but further copies are available.

● If you look in the BMS catalogue Around the World in 132 Ways, you'll find Page 5 lists all the World Mission Link material available. Your mission secretary should have a copy but further copies are available.



MISSION KIDS HAVE PAID A HIGH PRICE FOR THEIR PARENTS' CALL. KAREN CARTER AND **CLIVE PRICE** LOOK AT HOW SCHOOL HAS BEEN A VITAL SURROGATE HOME FOR THOSE UNSUNG HEROES OF THE MISSION FIELD.

'It's radically

changed but

the ethos of

the school

stems from its

missionary

foundations."

lympic champion Eric Liddell – whose story inspired the hit movie Chariots of Fire - was committed to the long haul from an early age. He was just six when his missionary parents in China sent

him to Eltham College, in Mottingham, south-west London.

Liddell was one of Eltham's most famous old boys. And the school has attracted countless sons like him – whose parents

have pioneered overseas work - since it was founded by the **Baptist Missionary** Society and the London Missionary Societies in 1842.

Daughters had a surrogate home at Eltham's sister school, Walthamstow Hall, in Sevenoaks, Kent, founded by people from non-conformist churches

in 1838. Girls' education used to be limited to finishing schools where studies mainly comprised etiquette, social and domestic skills.

However, as missionary work boomed, so too did the number of mission kids flocking to Eltham and

Walthamstow Hall. Brothers and sisters, cousins and friends arrived at their adoptive homes from as young as four to spend, on average, a decade at school.

Earlier this century, most missionaries were away for seven years at a time. Travel was hazardous and slow. Fear of tropical disease, and a desire for English schooling persuaded most parents to live apart from their children. It was a tough decision.

To this day, Eltham College and Walthamstow Hall support

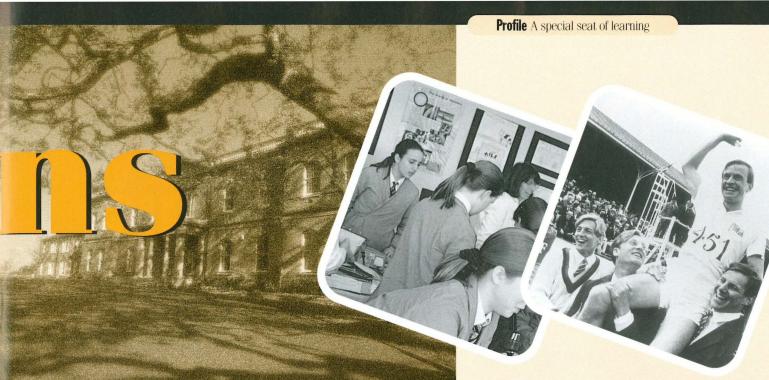
such families with The

Foundation Fund for the Children of Missionaries. A joint committee ensures that mission kids are educated on equal terms with all the other schoolchildren.

Much has changed in the closing years of the 20th century, not least the dramatic decrease in numbers of children from missionary families. Now,

most travel with their parents, returning to school in the run-up to final exams or joining at Sixth Form level.

When Eltham moved to its present Mottingham site in 1912, there were 81 boys on the roll. Numbers grew,



particularly when day boys joined the boarders, but gradually the sons of missionaries were not the only ones to enjoy Eltham's extensive facilities.

"In 1951 the roll reached 500, of which 56 were sons of missionaries," explained head Malcolm Green. "Security and stability have always been important to missionary children.

"Of course, it's difficult to generalise. But I've found they tend to be very independent and able intellectually, sometimes rather unworldly, and generally keen to become involved in very worthwhile jobs and projects."

He has spoken to some old boys, now in their 80s and 90s, who recall those early years so clearly. "What amazes me is that very few seem to bear a grudge against their families for leaving them," said Malcolm.

Bringing things up to date, Eltham now has 580 senior and 180 junior pupils, a handful of whom are mission kids. And the college now operates as a fully-fledged London day school, though boarding is available for 10

"It's radically changed," said Malcolm. "But the ethos of the school stems from its missionary foundations. Pastorally, academically and emotionally, we seek to support all our pupils - whatever their faith may be -

in as effective a way as possible."

BMS veteran the Revd Robert Draycott is chaplain and a religious studies teacher at Eltham. He started at the school in September 1992 after working with BMS in Brazil since

Sunday services no longer take place in the college chapel. There are so few boarders - though there is a daily act of worship during term time. "We're trying to maintain the school's traditional standards," said Robert. "But maybe now in a slightly different way as we cultivate a more general awareness of the world and its needs."

At Walthamstow Hall in Sevenoaks, head Jacqueline Lang believes "a helpful climate for development" is offered to those whose parents work on the mission field. The trend for those children to have a strong sense of community has been repeated at what is fondly known as Wally Hall – and Jacqueline is in no doubt as to why that should be.

"They feel part of an ongoing tradition here," she said. "What their parents are doing is seen as important. And it's valued in an atmosphere that's very supportive of them.

"The whole 160-year history of the school is bound up with what their parents are doing. The work is endorsed and that, in turn, encourages the children in their development and service and gives them a tremendous sense of belonging."

Today Walthamstow Hall has 500 pupils, of whom 50 are boarders. "We have very few missionary children now," said Jacqueline. "But there's no doubt they are still very important to

"In the early days of the school, when girls may have been separated from their families from the age of four or five, the girls almost transferred their family affections to their school.

"The headmistress even used to fill their Christmas stockings. We still have the tradition of the Boarders' Christmas Day. Thankfully the stocking-filling is no longer part of the head's duties!"

But many have paid a costly price for their parents" missionary call. One of Eltham College's most senior old boys tells the story of his elder brother's experience in the late 1800s.

His father was a missionary in Tahiti. At eight years old, the lad travelled by boat from the south seas to school in England. And he carried all his worldly possessions in a tiny "trunk" knocked together from communion wine crates.

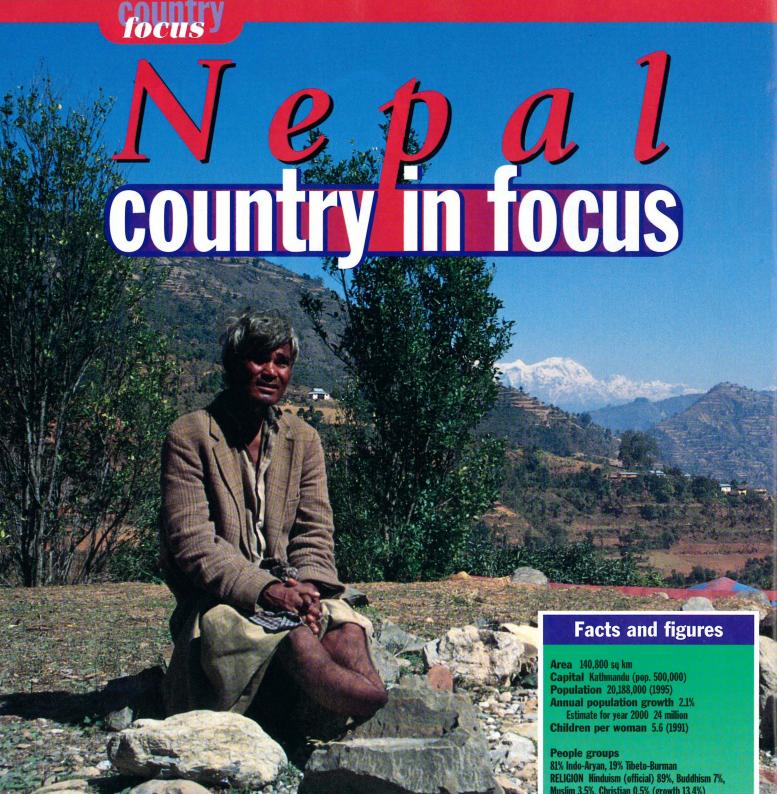
Eltham College became his home. But the boy didn't see his natural family again until he was a young man.

Karen Carter and Clive Price are journalists based in West Sussex. They undertake freelance assignments for various organisations, companies and charities.

FAR LEFT: Images of **Walthamstow Hall**

ABOVE LEFT: Eltham College and its students

ABOVE: Actor lan Charleston who immortalised old Eltham boy Eric Liddell in the film Chariots of Fire (Picture: British Film Institute)



A NATION CUT OFF FOR A CENTURY

From the mid 19th century until 1951 Nepal was cut off from the rest of the world in a showpiece Hindu state with few resources and wealth confined to the people in power. Then in a palace revolution King Tribhuwan broke the power of the Prime Ministers and began an experiment with democracy. In this time the borders began to open up, and from very small beginnings the

UMN (United Mission to Nepal) came into being in 1954. Open evangelism and proselytism was not allowed and some Christians were imprisoned. In 1962 political parties were outlawed, but massive civil unrest in 1990 brought about a change in the situation, with multi-party elections and an amnesty for political prisoners and dismissal of outstanding court cases. It is estimated that there were 25

81% Indo-Aryan, 19% Tibeto-Burman RELIGION Hinduism (official) 89%, Buddhism 7%, Muslim 3.5%, Christian 0.5% (growth 13.4%) LANGUAGES Nepali (official) spoken by only half the population. Tibetan is the second most common language. LITERACY 20%

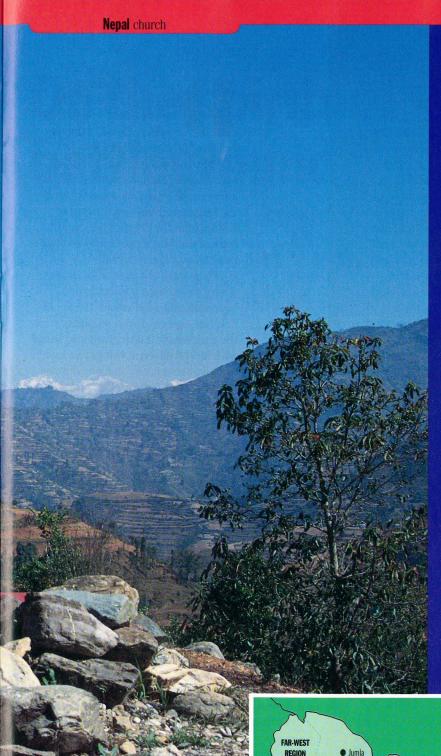
Health

One doctor for every 16,830 people (1990) Under five mortality 147 per 1000 (1991) Safe water 37% of the population has access

Communications

8 newspapers, 2 TV sets and 33 radio receivers per 1,000 people (1991)

Nepal is one of the five poorest nations in the world, on an economic level with Ethiopia.



The Church in Nepal

Paul Drinkwater views the growing Nepali church in Kathmandu

Cross the Bagamati bridge. Turn right by the little triangle in the road. Follow the road round and up a hill. Pass a pile of stones in the road. Turn right at the large tree by the tailor's shop. Pass two shrines and a school then take the second track on the left. The church is ahead of you on a bend. It is upstairs in a private house.

These were BMS education worker Joy Ransom's instructions for us to find her Nepali church, just under half an hour's walk from our temporary home in the United Mission to Nepal guest house. These were not directions along obscure country roads but right in the centre of the Patan/Kathmandu twin city complex. Teeming with life, traffic and buildings there are few road signs. The only notice in front of the church was a "Beware the dog" sign written in English and Nepali.

We had been in Nepal for five weeks and this was the fifth Nepali church that we had attended. In appearance they are different from British churches. Simple buildings, sometimes in homes or perhaps just a shed, they

REGION WEST Surkhet Pokhara Nepalganj Butwal Kathmandu CENTRAL

UMN MISSIONARIES

. Paul & Jackie Wicks

INF MISSIONARIES

Takum Chris & Alison Rudall

believed this number has risen to 50,000 or more by 1991. The situation is still a fragile one and local pressure and persecution continues.

believers in Nepal in 1960 and it is

The UMN is the largest missionary sending body with 300 missionaries from 40 agencies/18 countries. The INF (International Nepal Fellowship) has 121 missionaries in the west of Nepal.

Above: Hillside homes in the shadow of the Anapurna mountain range

are sparsely furnished. There might be a few chairs at the back for "bideshis" (foreigners) to sit on, but the Nepalis and some of the more adventurous bideshis sit cross-legged on the floor on a carpet or mats, men on one side -

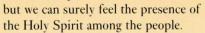
FAST

REGION

and women on the other.

There might be a small table at one end for the leader or preacher and perhaps a cross or an illustrated Bible text on the wall. Singing is usually accompanied by a drum and sometimes by an accordion, although in some of

the bigger churches guitars and electronic keyboards are used. Yet there is a warmth and vibrance among the worshippers often lacking in churches in the west. We may not understand all of what is being said



On this particular Sunday the passage is taken from 1 Corinthians 12. The pastor speaks about the body being made up of many parts, all important and vital for the correct functioning of his body, the church. The message is primarily for Nepali Christians but it is a message for the church universal. Paul writes that the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty. This strikes a chord. Some of those parts about which we are most modest are concerned with the reproductive process. The average church in Nepal is very modest compared with the glory and splendour of a European cathedral and yet Nepali churches are reproducing at a remarkable rate despite the law of the land which makes it illegal to persuade anyone to change their religion.

Saturday, the day of the week when government offices and many shops are closed, is the day Christians have to meet. There are about 15 churches in the capital, Kathmandu, with church plants increasing that number all the time. One of the largest we attended had about 600 present. It was a lively service and there was a separate class part way through for people who, although not Christians, were interested in finding out more.

One of the most refreshing observations is the lack of denominationalism. Because of the severe restrictions on Christian witness in Nepal, foreign Christians have not been free to evangelise under their denominational banners. Christian witness by ex-patriots is demonstrated here by service to the community working with organisations such as the United Mission to Nepal and the

> International Nepal Fellowship. In these, Christians from many denominations work together for the good of Nepal in general, supporting the local church by their attendance but not usually in leadership.

The Nepalis have been instrumental in church growth often in the face of persecution. When the country was opened up in 1954 after 200 years of isolation, Nepalis who had migrated to India and become Christians there brought back the gospel message.

Persecution comes in different ways. One Nepali pastor told how a few years ago police arrested the whole congregation one Saturday morning and marched them off to the police station. The leaders were held for three days, then freed with a warning.

But in these days of democracy there is much more freedom of worship now and as long as Christians are not openly browbeating people with their faith it appears that a blind eve is turned. However, the law is still on the statute book and from time to time extremist Hindu groups will try to enforce it. The result of this persecution is that the churches are enthusiastic and yet humble.

As yet we have come across little disunity among churches, and although there always will be problems when groups of people work together, I think we are unlikely to encounter a church in dispute over whether an organ or a guitar should lead the singing - there are no organs in Nepal!

Please pray for these churches that they will continue to grow and retain vitality and Spirit-led growth.

Paul and Hilary Drinkwater are BMS personnel on language training in Kathmandu after which Paul will be teaching electronics at Kathmandu University at Dhulikhel.

avid and Sandra had returned to Nepal, this time to work in a hill village. David, a doctor, and Sandra, a nurse, have two children, Matthew a baby of three months and Hannah, just two. Before going to the hills, David has to learn the language. This means living in Kathmandu for five months. Sandra has been to Nepal previously and had a good knowledge of Nepali.

Their small flat contains a large sitting room/dining room, two bedrooms and a bathroom. Great. At first one expects disturbed nights with the children. It is a tremendous change with lots of different things to adjust to. Sure enough, the children did not sleep or settle well and that meant two very tired parents.

But this continued for three weeks

and each night was the same. Something had to be done and Sandra and David knew what it was. They asked Frankie and me to visit the flat that night to pray the house through.

That evening we stood

together in a circle holding hands and prayed, in each room, commanding in the name of Jesus evil spirits to leave the room and never to return. The whole flat became warmer and peaceful. That night for the first time since moving to Nepal the family slept all night.

A few weeks later the family moved again, upstairs to a bigger flat. This time, on the day they moved, we went into each room, anointing with oil the lintel of each room. Again, we felt the cold spirit leave the rooms.

Our God is great, and so caring. While we were in Kathmandu, we

lived in the United Mission to Nepal Salem guest house. In the house there were five rooms, one of which had only recently been made

On the spiritual battleground

THE WIND BLOWS, SOMETIMES STRONG, SOMETIMES GENTLY. WE CANNOT SEE IT, BUT WE CAN FEEL IT. **GLYN PHILLIPS** RELATES THESE REAL STORIES ABOUT THINGS YOU CANNOT SEE, BUT CAN FEEL

into a bedroom. It was downstairs; unfortunately, a cold, damp room.

Caroline and Tim from BMS had come to Nepal for the first time and were to stay for five months to learn

the language. One morning at breakfast they asked if we had heard any strange noises in the night. Of course, we replied, you know how quiet it is at night! Dogs

ocus moo, cars honk

horns – Kathmandu is never quiet at night!

The next night we were both woken by the guest house cat screaming outside, obviously terrified. There was another noise, too, a loud groaning, swishing noise – eerie, unnerving and frightening. It seemed to circle the building, and with a scream disappear. We quietly prayed, then eventually went back to sleep.

Caroline and Tim had heard it even more clearly than we and were naturally upset and disturbed; it had stopped outside the door to their room. That night we prayed quietly in their room, again commanding the spirit to leave in the name of Jesus. It was a very cold room and remained so, but it never returned while they stayed there.

We have a lovely little house here in Butwal. We believe that the Lord chose this house for us. On the weekend we came from Kathmandu to view it, the Nepali landlord had been to the house and performed puja, a form of worship to Hindu gods. Symbols had been placed over the main entrance to the house and a picture of a god. We noticed this when we arrived, and mentally made a note to remove them when we moved in.

Five weeks later we arrived to stay, delighted that the house was ready. We had to unpack quickly; friends were coming to stay within a week. Our priority was to remove the symbols from the doorway.

Opening a window in the bathroom one morning five days later, Frankie slipped and fell on a concrete step, landing in the

shower area. and injuring her back.

On the second night our friends were staying, we asked them to pray through the house with us,

commanding the evil spirits to leave. We especially prayed for safety in the bathroom. We went even up on to the roof. It was dark by then and the stars were out but we noticed with surprise three Hindu symbols. We took them down immediately and threw them away as far as we could.

While praying outside the house we found more worship symbols over another doorway, so we anointed with oil all the door lintels.

We all commented on how in certain rooms we felt a presence. Our house seemed to get warmer, and a feeling of real peace settled upon it

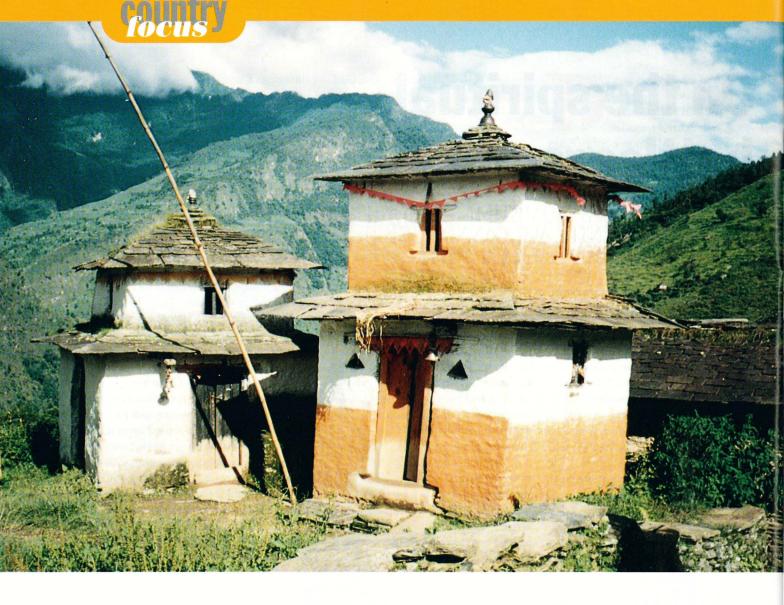
that night. We were sad that we hadn't prayed over our house as soon as we moved in – we both felt Frankie had been "pushed" when she fell in the bathroom. Jesus speaks clearly about the

"evil ones". They do exist, we have proved it and felt their presence.
You can walk around certain streets and areas in Kathmandu and feel the evil spirits – a tingling in your spine – and the area is cold even in bright sunshine.

When you pray please cover each one of us in Nepal that we will be protected from these unseen powers. We all know that our God is mighty and strong in battle and he will overcome. He is our strength.

Glyn and his wife Frankie are serving with the BMS in Butwal.





ecently, the leaders of Phalyagaon, a village two hours' walk up the valley put a request to the Community Health Programme in which we are working. They had been renovating the Hindu temple below the village. Only one thing remained to complete the job to their satisfaction – a small pipeline and tapstand to supply water to the site for the resident priestess and for the regular festivals and sacrifices that take place.

Their request brought into focus an issue that is becoming increasingly significant for the Christian in development work – the tension existing between the objectives of the Christian development agency and the perceived needs of the communities with whom we work.

Three years ago when we first moved to Nepal I had a rather smug belief that the rural health project in which we were to engage would not only meet the needs of the people we serve, but also match my understanding of the gospel of Jesus. We joined a long tradition of missionaries involved in curative and, more recently, preventive healthcare. People need healing, and health services address that need, at the same time fitting neatly with one particular aspect of the gospel. Nowadays those of us who are missionaries in development work are finding that the gospel agenda may no longer fit so snuggly with the development agenda.

Different

CHRIS RUDALL EXAMINES THE DILEMMA FACING CHRISTIAN WORKERS IN A DIFFERENT CULTURE

The reason for this is that current development thinking is moving away from a serving, giving approach, towards a self-help, self-determining model: the needs of the people as perceived by the people. The expert is making way for the change-agent and facilitator. Control is shifting away from the agency towards the people themselves.

What this may mean in practice is that whereas the Christian agency may see the priorities as, for example, improved health services, clean water, adult literacy, the priorities as far as the people are concerned may be quite different – for example a new high-school building; a new mill, or repairs to the local temple. All these activities may



Agendas country in focus

be of value to the community, but the emphasis is different.

The situation is compounded by the fact that we have to take account of several agendas. Beside our understanding of the gospel and the perceived needs of the people, we must also consider the objectives of the Nepal government since without its approval we would not be able to work here. Then there are our supporters' expectations in the UK; what would you think if you found BMS personnel engaged in providing essential services for Hindu temples? And there are the views of donor agencies funding the work, all of whom have a claim on the direction it may take.

So do we alter course each time there is a change in

government policy, or in the community's perception of its own needs? Do we try to conform to the shifting standard of politically correct development ideology? Or do we stick doggedly to our original five year plan? Where does our responsibility, our obligation lie? To whom are we answerable?

Firstly to the Lord, and to his teaching – but the Bible isn't always clear. Jesus' response to the needs of others was and is sometimes enigmatic and never as expected. He addressed people's needs but not always as they saw them, and often in ways that were beyond their wildest dreams.

The paralysed man in Mark 2 first of all had his sins forgiven, and only then did Jesus deal with his physical healing. In John 5, the sick man at the pool of Bethesda saw his need as someone to help him into the water, but Jesus healed him instantly.

As Christians we are not called to be men-pleasers, but by taking a Christ-centred view we open ourselves to accusations of having a "we know best" attitude. This may well be a danger, but there are also times when those on the outside of a situation have a better perspective than those directly involved. The poor and destitute are often unable to see beyond the next meal and may have neither the energy nor the will to begin to determine their own future.

Another way of looking at the issue is to seek ways of maintaining our dialogue with the people among whom we are working. Building a tapstand at the temple is hardly advancing the cause of Hinduism, but if we turned down the request, we would put at risk the very relationships we are seeking to nurture. In Matthew 17 Jesus discusses with Peter the question of paying the temple taxes. Jesus' reason

for paying is "that we may not offend them". And risk of offence is a real possibility here, too.

We have to find a way of working by which we can keep a clear conscience not misleading donor agencies or supporters but also not trying to operate to an unattainable developmental ideal. In doing this we will probably never be satisfied or completely comfortable. It is perhaps a consequence of the way that we have chosen that we will always face conflicting demands on our time and resources. In the same way that those of us working abroad perch uncomfortably on the rough interface between cultures, so all of us who follow Jesus will never be totally at ease with the world around us.

My conviction remains that beyond the many excellent development activities that are going on here, the only way that the people of these mountains and valleys will enter fullness of life is through an encounter with Jesus himself.

Politically correct? No way! ●

Chris Rudall and his wife, Alison, serve with the BMS in the remote village of Takum, Nepal







Some missionary kids were asked to write about suffering. This is a selection of what they came up with:

Lord, why did you bring me here to Nepal?

Just to make close friends that I would have to leave and say goodbye to.

You know I hate to say goodbye and you know that you always have to say goodbye when you're in Nepal.

So why did you bring me here?

It couldn't happen to us.
You're our protector.
But it came. Small. Unseen.
Don't know why, or where from.

She was stricken.
Attacking her body.
Why didn't you protect us?

She's weak. Hours in the hospital. She's gone.

Why did you have to take her away?

Why is there cancer?

Why did Mom get it?

Why did...

God

You say you love us but you still don't take care of us.
You say you love us but you let us get hurt physically and emotionally.

You let us lose friends without a second thought.
You let hundreds of kids die without a second thought of what they could have been.

But you still say you want the best for us. You tell us to care about others but it doesn't feel like you care about us.

Why do so many suffer?

Can someone be expected to live their life when they can't walk,

but need to drag themselves along? Why do some people have so much, and others so little?

Why does war hurt so many innocent people?
A little girl watches her father get pumped with lead.
Why?

Why are families torn apart?

Why do people suffer unbelievably painful emotional stress? What for?

Why?

Why must there B such discrimination and hate 4 innocent ones who can't decide their fate

Lord show them Help them

That your love is always there
Show them that they must believe in U
2 let them know that U care
I know you're always in control
But still you let these things happen
There must be a reason Lord

Why is this so
And I just wanted to let U know
That in the midst of this I still luv U so

1st world
2nd world
3rd world
4th world
Wait a minute
Don't we live in 1 world?
God, can't you help?
I'm just a 15-year-old
immature boy, struggling through puberty.
What time is there?
I've just got two hands, ten fingers, no
knowledge.
I'm mortal.
You're the all-powerful.
You made us.

BOPKiew

Bosshardt - A Biography by Jean Watson published by Monarch Publications

This book is an engaging testimony to a remarkable man whose commitment and example was an inspiration to many. He was a missionary to China from the 1920s to 1951 and then for 15 years in Pakse, Laos. You cannot help being struck by how God used Alfred and Rose, his wife, in so many ways.

When I was asked to review this book my heart sank; not another biography of a missionary. Details of these great missionary people of God make me feel so inadequate.

But I became absorbed and encouraged as well as challenged. In all circumstances Alfred Bosshardt rejoiced in God's goodness and grace. When detained by the Red Army in 1934 and accused of being a capitalist spy, Alfred spoke to one of the officials about God, but he countered: "Who is your God to let you fall into our hands?"

"Perhaps," replied Bosshardt, "he has sent me to bear witness for him so that you may know he is the living God."

His spirit and determination is so evident through the book of which about half is given to an extensive description and detail of his involvement in Mao's Long March. The 560 days he spent in captivity

enduring the 2,500-mile march are

graphically told.

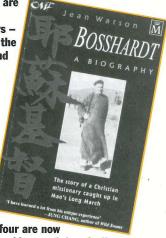
At times I was driven to tears – embarrassing on the train – by the cruelty, the poverty, brutality and pain, and yet on returning to China to the very province in which he was captured, he and Rose commented that it was simply a matter of continuing obedience.

In this book we see how God blessed that faithfulness, how he used the commitment and love to build his church in China. Today those pioneering churches have

grown. Their congregations of four are now many thousands and many fellowships, such has God's grace been through many years of the church's oppression in that land.

Read this book, not for what it tells you about China or the Long March or the Church, but as an encouragement, a stimulation and a challenge to our own missionary calling today.

Andy Stockbridge



Focus on prayer for missionary families

Lord, we pray for parents

who must agonise for weeks, months if not years as to how to do the best thing for their children. To keep them

Or to send them away to school

- but it's thousands of miles Lord
- it might even be a different country
- and they'll no longer be able to do the sort of everyday rough-and tumble things that families do together.

Lord, we pray for the children

- some would say pawns in the game of "Call a Missionary to a Distant Land"
- they didn't ask to have this particular set of parents, parents who flout convention and give up all for a Greater Good.

Perhaps they don't feel called to India or China or Timbuktu. And they feel lonely, with few playmates, and those friends they have are only passing through - like their parents.

Lord, we pray for the wider family -

aunts and uncles, nephews and nieces, grandparents and cousins, brothers and sisters,

- all who miss participating in a family life when a part of that family is overseas.

Perhaps they don't understand the reasons why they have gone to serve you, and indeed are hostile to their going. Or they're growing old, Lord, and they are afraid of what will happen to them, with no-one around to look after them.

Lord, we lift up to you all missionary parents and we ask that you will remove the throbbing anxiety from the decisions over their children's futures.

We ask that you will lift the guilt and the weight of anguish from their shoulders.

We pray against the forces of evil that would seek to compound the agony faced by parents in this situation. Remove the fear. Remove the guilt. Remove the torment. Breathe your peace. Breathe your compassion and your love.

Lord, we lift up to you all missionary children and we ask that they may grow up as mature, well-adjusted kids.

For those who are bitter we pray that they may experience so much love that their pain melts away.

For those who are naive and suffer culture-shock we ask that

you will soften the blows. We pray against the forces of evil that would use the worry concerning missionary children to undermine the parents

work for the Kingdom. Remove the hurt. Remove the feeling of abandonment. Remove the anger.

Breathe your peace. Breathe your compassion and your love.

Lord, we lift up to you all who are in the wider missionary family

and we ask that they may feel proud to be part of the purposes of a missionary sending God.

And for those who resent you taking their children and grandchildren far away,

we pray that they may have a vision of who you are, and why it is so important to obey your call.

We pray against the forces of evil that would cause people to have unnecessary anxieties and guilt-trips over family

ACTIO& ard

COMMUNITY HEALTH - WEST BANK

The work of the International Christian Committee, Jerusalem, one of Christian Aid's partners, remains crucial in bringing primary health care to Palestinian families in the remote villages of the West Bank, particularly as a result of the closure of the territories by Israel since 1993.

More recently, with the 'collective punishment' inflicted upon all Palestinian people by Israel since the Hammas bombings, the further sealing of the borders prevents any movement which has led to a dramatic rise in unemployment, especially among village wage-earners and the depletion of 8,000 people from four villages.

The centres operate as community centres with stress on active involvement of the village population and on preventative medicine. Babies are regularly weighed, immunisation programmes implemented, supplementary feeding and advice on family diet given especially at times when food shortages and deficiencies are experienced. Home visits by nurses are regularly made and support given to children who have to be hospitalised.

It is perhaps interesting to note that non-governmental organisations provide 60% of the primary health care services to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Since 1990, Israel has been spending 18.3 dollars per capita on health care in the occupied territories annually, compared with 600 dollars in Israel.

In support and encouragement of the work done in the Mother and Child Health Care Programmes in the West Bank, particularly at this time of extreme border closures.

Please send your Action Card to: Elias Khoury **International Christian Committee (ICC)** PO Box 19195

Jerusalem



members who are safe in your care.

Remove the conflict. Remove the suffering. Remove the frustration. Breathe your peace. Breathe your compassion and your love.

We know, Lord, that your perfect will for the parent is not going to overlook the child, nor vice versa. We pray for us all as we struggle to come to terms with your will. Your good, pleasing and perfect will.

May we know your peace, your compassion and your love.





Helen Coles and Melanie Fernades part of the Albanian Action Team

Of carnivorous mosquitoes and Albanian bakers

ONCE MET, NEVER FORGOTTEN ARE THE 28:19 ACTION TEAMS. WRITES SAM GIBSON - 22 ENTHUSIASTIC YOUNG PEOPLE. WHO HAVE DEVELOPED A PASSION FOR WORLD MISSION



PRESENTATIONS, DRAMA, MUSIC. AND MUCH MORE, THEIR TOUR BEGAN LAST MONTH BUT THERE IS STILL TIME TO HEAR THEIR STORIES...

very member of the BMS 28:19 **Action Teams** will readily confess that their time overseas was nothing like they expected.

Challenges and surprises, sights and sounds they could never dream of have conspired to radically alter these young people. They have learned by experience that you can never be fully prepared for what God is going to do.

Melanie Fernandes was amazed at the generosity of the impoverished Albanian people.

"Buying bread was a daily event we enjoyed. One night however, our usual baker was all sold out so a hunt began. First to one shop and then to another, only to find the same response – that all the bread was sold out. One shopkeeper gave directions to another shop and lent us his bike, so the journey could be made more quickly. However, we returned unsuccessful (our bearings around Tirana still weren't

up to scratch).

"The shopkeeper however, was intent on helping his friends out so closing up his store, he went off on the bike in search of a loaf and returned with one steaming hot and fresh in his hands. This was an incident which typifies the generosity and warm care we received whilst in Albania and was a challenge to us to always 'go the extra mile' whenever required."

Hugh Clements-Jewery agreed. "We thought we were going to Albania to give but we have received far more than we ever hoped. It is impossible to describe all of our experiences, to explain all that we have learned but we look back over our six months in Albania with much joy. It was a privilege to live, love and work with the Albanian people as we learnt to value community living in the wider family of the church."

For the Trinidad team, the post played an important role in their time overseas – along with stifling temperatures... carnivorous

28:19 28:19 28:19

mosquitoes... kamikaze drivers... ice-cold coconuts... beaches... three hour services... powerful worship... ladies covering their heads... three Hindu girls being converted... 6am wake ups and much, much more.

Angela Richardson says, "It's strange where opportunities can arise. Receiving mail was an essential part of team morale and each day we would wait for the post, our life-line to home. A friendship with our postman developed through which we learnt that he was a pastor of a small local church. An invitation followed for us to lead a service, which God greatly used and a valuable friendship was established. Thank God for opportunities."

Oliver Campbell Smith says that working in France changed his attitude to World Mission. "Imagine a town that is made up just of houses and a small church... you've just imagined Morsang-sur-Orge, near Paris! It wasn't quite what we had expected. Supporting a small struggling church in a Western society isn't exactly the same as meeting Mother Theresa in India or basking in the Trinidadian sun.

"However, France is also a mission field and although at times the work was frustrating and difficult, we genuinely feel that we made a significant contribution to the church there. One highlight was an evangelistic Christmas meal we held. It is difficult for many people in France to enter a protestant church as all non Roman Catholic churches are considered to be sects. Despite this, we were thrilled to see forty non-Christians come and join us for the meal and leave with a positive attitude towards the Gospel."

Anna Willott greatly enjoyed her time in France. She says: "So many good things have happened during our time in Bordeaux. One event which was particularly successful was a youth weekend in Albi which we helped to lead. We had lots of encouraging feedback from the people there. Our time overseas has been very rewarding and fulfilling. We were greatly blessed although the work was not always easy. We have learned a lot and feel we have been an encouragement to the churches we have visited."

Jo Pillinger tells how the India/Sri Lanka Team also learned valuable lessons while overseas. "One of the most remarkable times for us was when we were asked to put together a youth service at very short notice. With a lack of preparation and enthusiasm we managed to get through it without too much pain.

"Afterwards however, much to our surprise, we were asked to pray with a group of seven young people who had decided to commit their lives to Christ that night. We realised how God had worked through us to help those seven make that step without us having any idea that these people

would make this crucial decision. God used us in ways we never dreamed of."

Every team member has expressed a big thank you to all those who upheld them with continual prayer support. They say that without doubt, it empowered and aided all they did. God challenged them in ways they never imagined and they will never be the same again.

Look out for these tour dates still to come:

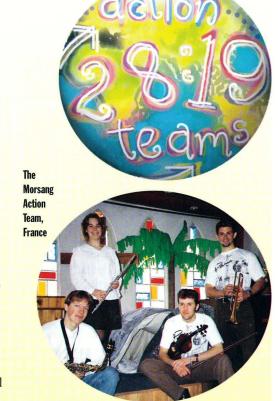
3 - 9 June

Paris Team in Scotland Bordeaux Team in Central and East Trinidad Team in North and Mid Wales Albania Team in North India/Sri Lanka Team in South Wales

10 - 16 June

Paris Team in North
Bordeaux Team in
Midlands
Trinidad Team in Central
and East
Albania Team in South
and West
India/Sri Lanka Team in
London and South East

For details of the venues the teams will be stopping at in your region, please contact your BMS coordinator.





prayerfocus

EUROPE



ALBANIA

Based in Tirana, Glyn is involved in all aspects of EBF (European Baptist Federation) agricultural work and Gill in general administration and running the Albanian Language School. After Christmas they helped to begin a new fellowship group along with three Americans and another Briton. At the moment, they outnumber the Albanians in the tiny fellowship group but this is because they have discouraged Albanians who worship at the First Baptist Church, Tirana from transferring their allegiance. They recently had their first conversion.

Glyn has been busy distributing vegetable and flower seeds which came from the UK courtesy of "Feed The Children". Four usually unemployed Albanians sort the packets at the Baptist Centre for distribution to farmers in the mountains and on the plain. Each pack also includes two Christian booklets and the distribution is funded by

Operation Agri. One of the four packers, Berti, lives in a tiny 5' x 10' dark, lean-to hut which he built illegally against one of the walls of the Baptist Centre. The church had to stop him breaking a window through the wall but did not have the heart to move him on. After help, he and his wife began to go to church where first she and then he were converted. The four seed sorters have had no job for five years and there are thousands like them in Tirana alone.

Please pray

- that the new fellowship will grow and thrive with many more Albanians coming
- for Berti and his wife that their relationship with God continues to develop and that there be some hope for a different financial future
- for the language courses, computer courses, seed distribution and all the other activities the church runs involving friendship evangelism, may God continue to change lives though these activities



Chris spends much of

BANGLADESH



VALERIE HAMILTON

Valerie was forced to keep a very low profile for several weeks in the north of the country, due to the strike action. In the midst of this volatile situation, she was unable to communicate with home. She has now returned to Dhaka.

Please pray

- for Valerie's continued safety
- for a successor as she prepares to leave Bangladesh in June

his time preparing study material for various purposes in English and Italian but finds swapping between the two languages very tiring. He has agreed to do some simultaneous translation (Italian into English) for a conference of African churches in North Western Italy. This is beyond his language ability so he hopes the participants are as good humoured as his mistakes will demand! He has also begun a Christian discipleship/discovery group with three

Philippino women. One of the group comes from a background of animist religion and has made a commitment to follow Christ. For her, discovering God who loves and cares for her is like coming out of the dark and into the light.

Sarah builds relationships with everyone she meets regularly: neighbours, stall holders at the local market, teachers at the nursery and other mothers. They have become open and welcoming and are

interested in what the Mattock's are doing in Italy, some asking questions about Sarah's faith compared with their own cultural background.

Please pray:

- thanks for the safe arrival and continuing good health of new baby **Judith**
- for those attending the discipleship/discovery class, that they grow in their faith and understanding of Christ
- for continued improvement in language study, especially with the conference coming soon



BELGIUM

The Filby's have begun a new language study course at Antwerp University to improve their Flemish. The course runs three evenings per week and on a Saturday morning and the return journey is over 200 miles each day. Returning home

after midnight, exhausted and unsure in which language they are thinking is hard work. On the two spare days, they attend a language class in Bruge which is just a few miles up the coast.

Stuart and Joyce have decreased their involvement with the church in Middlekerk where Stuart was one of the pastors. They still attend the meetings and Stuart preaches there but he no longer has any responsibility for the church. The congregation are getting used to the idea that the Filby's will be beginning a new church from their home in September. Another group which the Filby's established at the end of last year in Ostend continues. Due to their need to study, the Filby's had to discontinue with this group too although they continue to visit and hope to become involved with them again in September.

Please pray:

- of for good progress in language study
- for physical energy to cope with the travelling

and late nights

- for the church in Middlekerk, that it will grow and develop
- for God's blessing on the group in Ostend
- for people to be raised up to take part in the planned plant at the Filby's home, people with gifts such as music

BRAZIL



In recent months there have been violent electrical storms in southern Brazil with a high occurrence of people struck by lightning. In March, 21 year old Marileia, a church member from Ilha Rasa was killed by a lightning strike. Her husband Verci and their 18 month old child Samuel were badly burned but are now recovering. Marileia was the church treasurer, being one of few people in the church able to read and

write. Gerry and Johan have felt the loss deeply as they were involved in the couple's initial courtship and marriage. One of the consequences of the tragedy has been that four of Verci's relatives who had been excluded from the church have since asked to be reconciled.

Please pray:

- for Verci and his young son as they look to a future without Marileia
- for Marileia's mother who is devastated by the
- for those who have been reconciled to the church through this tragedy
- for all at the church as they attempt to absorb what has happened



ALBANIA

Roger and Nikki have been in Albania since the middle of January and continue to grapple with the language. Language training is both formal and informal with individual teaching and shared conversations with Albanian people. There is still much novelty for the people to speak to foreigners as this was forbidden during Communist times.

Please pray

- for continued progress with the language
- for friendships to develop with local people for guidance on church

involvement

ASIA - SRI LANKA

PETER AND MARGARET GOODALL

The North East monsoon failed this year and there is very little rain in the catchment areas leaving many reservoirs at a very low level. As most of the electricity for the hill country comes from hydro schemes, there is an emergency situation now. There have been daily power cuts of four or five hours although at the beginning of May, these had dropped to two hours per day but the heavy rains had still not come. If the water level in the reservoirs continues to fall, all electricity could go off. Long power cuts mean cooking, faxing, doing the laundry, using the computer etc at very strange hours and some evening church services have had to be changed around as it gets dark at 6.30pm.

Please pray:

of for the monsoon to come before all power is lost, water is also needed to supply the people as temperatures reach 980 indoors.



rayer



Nepal

Margaret teaches children whose parents work in the TB and Leprosy Project based in Surkhet but which operates throughout midwestern Nepal. The project aims to control these diseases as well as cure them with long term treatment, but the course of treatment must be completed. It is difficult to find patients in remote areas and then ensure they complete their medication despite feeling better in the early stages. If they break off their medication and then the illness recurs, they cannot then be cured and can pass on a drug resistant form of the illness. In March, the project rented a large building in Nepalganj to be a new leprosy and TB clinic taking in and out patients. It will save many patients long journeys and perhaps encourage those who would not otherwise, to go for treatment.

The churches in Surkhet are thriving and Margaret has been asked to teach music to interested

young people who want to lead worship. Every Thursday evening she has four or five playing guitars Nepali style, drums and harmonium. Everyone is very keen and practices hard. The singing in church services has considerably improved!

Please pray

- of for the search for TB and leprosy patients and for the completion of their medication
- thank God that patients are flocking to the new clinic and pray for extra staff to take some of the pressure
- thank God for the enthusiasm of those wishing to lead worship, pray it doesn't wear off!



Bangladesh

In mid February, most programmes at Chandraghona Christian Hospital had to be stopped due to a general strike. During a lull, Sue and her companion Authoi set out in the jeep for nearby Chittagong to see friends and do some shopping. However, a riot began prompted by the arrest of the mayor, and bombs, gunfire, looting and rioting erupted all over the city.

Sue and Authoi fled to the nearest friend's house where they staved for three days whilst the rioting continued.

On the third day, the violence was relaxed for two hours to allow Moslems to go to pray. Whilst other expatriates were evacuated to Dhaka, Sue and Authoi made a break for home in their jeep. Chittagong was a blackened war zone and almost all government offices, banks, factories, the GPO and airline office were burnt to the ground but an hour later they were in Chandraghona and very relieved. As the strike continued non-stop, Sue remained confined to the house where she was very frustrated and bored. Tension in the country has now eased somewhat and a new general election has been called.

Please pray

- for peace and stability to return to Bangladesh
- thank God for Sue's safekeeping and pray it continues
- that the hospital's community health programmes quickly return to normal
- the weaving project continues to do well and is looking for a new sales outlet in Dhaka

a senior general surgeon and director of nursing are desperately needed for the hospital



TIM AND CAROLINE TRIMBLE

Nepal

Tim and Caroline's roles in the UMN (United Mission to Nepal) have evolved so that Tim is now **UMN Financial Controller** and Caroline is UMN Internal Auditor. Caroline has been working on one emergency after another recently setting up a new accounting system for a Nursing Campus in Kathmandu. Her task of restoring data and accounts which were lost due to a computer crash, has been further complicated by a problem with a password.

Tim and Caroline are slowly becoming more integrated into their Nepali church. Their reading skills are improving continually and they can now keep up with the singing. Caroline teaches in the Sunday School (which is held on a Saturday!) one month in every three. She is teaching the oldest class in a mixture of Nepali and English.



Please pray

for development in language skills freeing the Trimbles to be more involved in church life poor health since January has been wearing Tim and Caroline down, pray for energy and an increased resistancy to stomach bugs in particular consists of small microbuses into which up to 20 people are crammed or, the Emergency Taxis (ET's). ET's are usually estate cars and carry 10 people - four stuffed in the boot! Despite enjoying the experience, they were not too upset when their own vehicle finally made it into the country.

know the work they will be involved in

Please pray

thank God for providing the Igoes with a house, there are very few to rent pray for a breakthrough in the language training that Jill and Philip soon

JUNE 1996

Phil and Rosemary Halliday from Massy Ian and Pauline Thomas from Carcassonne David and Ann MacFarlane from Altamura John and Norma Clark from Fortaleza

Departures

Overseas Visits

Revd David Martin to Hong Kong Revd John Passmore to Italy

Rena Mellor from Kinshasa

Anonymous gifts For March 1996 TOTAL £884

remember the work of the gospel in their wills and we give thanks to God for the following

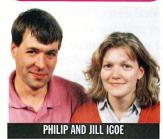
Coulson Mr Walter E	16,500.00
Cullimore Miss Annie E M	676.00
Field Mr John G	7,160.90
Iliff Mr Edgar	500.00
Livingston Mrs Christine	500.00
Miles Mr D T	200.00
Spendlove Mrs Ivy A	120.00
Taylor Mrs Winifred E	2,500.00
West Miss Lillian B	2,000.00
TOTAL	£30,156.00

BMS Projects

Breaking Chains	£32,246
Mighty Warrior	£326
By His Stripes	£285

More financial details are outlined in the BMS Review of 1995, (free with this issue of MH), additional copies of which are available from Christine Neilson at BMS.

AFRICA



Africa

The Igoes have been undergoing language study since their arrival in Zimbabwe in February. They've mastered the greetings in Shona and the incredibly positive response they get from people is sufficient encouragement to persevere with the task. They settled into a house in Gweru and will soon begin work with Jill hoping to teach in a local school and Philip engaged in some kind of training with the National Baptist Convention.

One of the ways the Igoes have discovered of getting close to the local population is by using public transport. This

nepal



BOB AND RUTH ELLETT

An accident involving a friend of the Ellett's earlier this year brought home just how dangerous illness can be in Nepal. When Tom, an American forester with UMN was knocked off his motorbike just outside Butwal, the nearest hospital could offer an X-ray highlighting a broken knee cap, shoulder and hand but little more. The decision was made to transport Tom to Tansen. An hour later, a van was found but the seats had to be removed. Twenty minutes later they began the journey with Tom on a drip and his broken bones splinted. By this time it was getting dark so a torch was found so that the drip could be checked and they began travelling up a treacherous road full of potholes on a painfully slow journey to Tansen. The journey took nearly four hours as every movement was agony to Tom . Six doctors were waiting at Tansen as Bob and Ruth had travelled on ahead to warn them. After discovering a blood clot on the brain he was helicoptered to Kathmandu. Despite all of this, Tom is miraculously well on the way to recovery. Bob says, "My friend had a very close brush with death. It is not only true to say he could have died, but on the evidence he should have died." The Ellett's believe it was prayer which pulled Tom through, from the moment word spread of his accident, Christian Nepali's were praying fervently.

Please pray:

- praise God for his miraculous intervention in saving this man's life
- pray for the health and safety of all Christian workers in Nepal and other countries, may they never need to test the 'health service'
- thank God for all those involved in medical work overseas, may he bless their work as they teach and train nationals to continue the work themselves

Nepal

It brings tears to the eyes

itting in the dark I couldn't believe what I was sure was about to happen. To escape from essays and books, a group of theological students had decided to see the latest box office attraction at the local cinema. As the film drew towards its close, sobs could be heard from all around. The atmosphere was charged with emotion and the thing I could not believe was that one of the colleagues with whom I had gone, was taking his handkerchief from his pocket in preparation for the flood of tears which the scene demanded.

It's funny what moves people to tears. Sometimes we cry for others and sometimes for ourselves. At times it's for joy or in pain or in sadness. That particular film didn't open the flood gates for me but there was a distinct moistness in the eyes as I stood in a mission hospital delivery room looking at our first child.

The journey from north west Bangladesh to Chandraghona in the South East had been long, bumpy and tiring. Then the waiting seemed interminable and at least swatting the mosquitoes during the labour had given me something to do although it was not in any of the antenatal books we had read! Then there he was, in my arms, amazing.

> Not long after that, a mobile team came from the local district hospital to hold a family planning camp in the council offices next door to our house.

The building had neither electricity nor water so we ran an electric cable from our house and fixed a couple of light bulbs up. We also passed buckets of water over the wall from our well and filled a

> 45 gallon drum from which water could be ladled when necessary. There was a constant stream of women arriving for tubal ligations, leaving a day later clutching the cash and wearing the new sari which were the rewards for not having more children.

There were not many men on the last day when it was their turn. Not even the promise of money and a lungi could persuade them! We were holding Bible classes for our lay leaders during the days of the family planning camp and eventually after a long discussion some of the men decided that for them to have a vasectomy would be the best thing for their family. As their pastor and teacher I had to go and "hold their hand". That in itself was enough to make the eyes water but there was worse to follow!

It was getting dark when the electricity went off half way through the last operation. There were no spare hands so I had to hold the "Tilley" lamp for the surgeon to complete his task. That meant being very close to the action and I will never know if it was the heat from the lamp or what was happening on the table but I definitely began to feel decidedly wobbly and was glad when it was all over and we could get back to the course on John's gospel I was teaching!

I was moved tremendously more recently, celebrating the Lord's Supper with a congregation of new believers in Albania. The service was simple and I didn't understand a word although I knew that we all affirmed "He is risen indeed, Hallelujah" after the pastor had said "Christ is risen".

A week before I had stood with 50 or so others on top of the highest tor on Dartmoor as the sun rose and shouted with joy, the same exclamation. In Albania, on the day the orthodox church celebrates Easter, it was brilliant to celebrate with those young Christians and as we went forward to receive bread and wine the emotions welled up as again I was faced with the realisation of what Christ had done for me and what the risen Christ meant to me and to these people.



The last time I visited that church they were meeting in the open air and the vines which were heavy with grapes offered shade to the congregation. Now we were drinking the wine which had been pressed from those same grapes. Back in the cinema, my friend fooled us all, in the silence, just as Ali Macgraw died, he raised his handkerchief and . . . blew his nose loudly!

John Passmore takes a sideways view

John Passmore, the BMS Europe Representative, was a missionary in Bangladesh for 10 years



OPEN TO HURT ...

I may be making waves when I say that in our culture we have an unhealthy "self-love". This complex is seen in all sorts of ways, not least in our interest in psychological analysis. Not only do we want to look good but we want to feel good about ourselves – and analysts are laughing all the way to the bank.

Nevertheless, the human psyche is just as vulnerable and open to hurt as the human body. Emotional damage, however, is not so obvious to the eye. We can pretend that such hurt does not exist; indeed as Christians we are particularly good at ignoring painful parts of life. So, the issue of Mish Kids must not be ignored, for many today are scarred by their sense of abandonment in the past.

If we are to pray intelligently for missionaries we must recognise that the issue of Mish Kids is probably the single most difficult problem missionaries have to face. But it is not just the parents who feel hurt; it is the children as well.

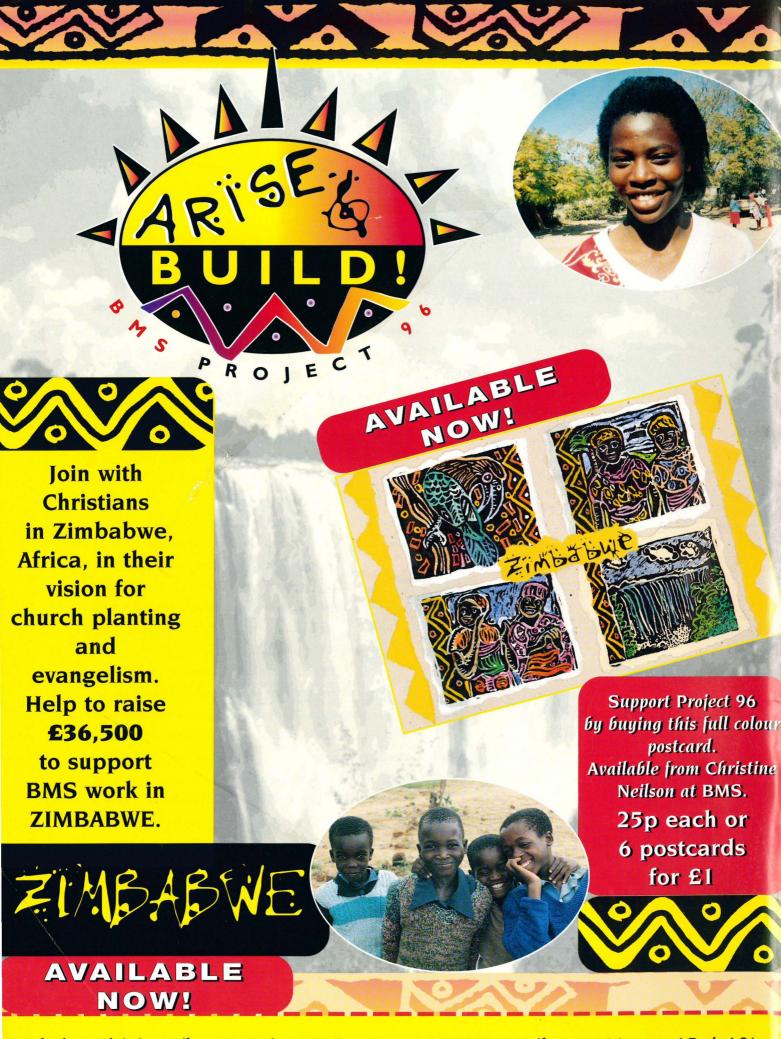
Peter Schellenbaum comments,: "People who were abandoned early and unloved are isolated and lack partners. They do to themselves what others have done

to them. They leave themselves in the lurch. Having rejected themselves, they no longer see anyone who could love them." ("The world of the unloved.")

Maybe this is making waves but I believe Schellenbaum describes many Mish Kids. A generation of children felt abandoned – and abandoned themselves.

Look out for these kids, many are still hurting.

Andrew Green is minister at Upton Vale Baptist Church, Torquay.



Telephone Christine Neilson, BMS Literature Secretary on: 01235 512077 if you want to support Project 96, and for your Project pack. Audio visual material will be available in June '96.





ACTION DAYS!

A day of fun and activity making world mission come alive for children aged around 6 to 13 years. Free of charge for WOW CLUB MEMBERS. £1 for non members.



near you during AUGUST

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Mansfield Road Baptist Church, Nottingham	Joan Manicom Tel: 0115 962 3235
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Stonehenge School, Amesbury, Salisbury	Bill Smith Tel: 01980 626124
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	Oakes Baptist Church, Huddersfield Llandrindod Wells Baptist Church, Powys Mansfield Road Baptist Church, Nottingham Pantygwydr Baptist Church, Swansea Stonehenge School, Amesbury, Salisbury Kenton Baptist Church, Harrow

- Action Days run from 10am to 4pm.
 Please bring a packed lunch, soft drinks will be provided.
- It will help if you could provide one helper for every eight children from your church.
- Please tell contact person how many children and helpers will be coming from your church.

Baptist Missionary Society

al



Baptist Theological Seminary Library Prague Czech Republic



We must do something to attract the young people; have you noticed how they drift away in their late teens. or

move out of town when they get a little older?

This, or something like it, is possibly among the 10 most well-worn conversation pieces in churches today. It usually accompanies much heart-searching and brain-racking in pursuit of a strategy to attract young adults into the congregation or to stop them drifting away.

Isn't it always the church down the road that seems to have cracked the mystery of the disappearing young people? What have they got that we haven't? So we play it cool and manufacture an enticing environment in the hope that they will come back to see what's happening.

If we want a living demonstration of successful involvement by young people, we need look no further than the BMS 28:19 Action Teams. Key ingredients to the scheme are challenge, purpose, trust, self-motivation, accountability and an active opportunity to live out their Christian faith. Translating these to local church life could just provide the shot-in-the-arm we're seeking.

Richard Wells

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Cover story TOO OLD TO BE A YOUTH LEADER Alan Dodds reflects on a life in youth mission 4 Steve Chalke NURTURING YOUNG DISCIPLES Too young to be given responsibility?.....9 **News section** (FOREIGN AND HOME NEWS) Looking at things with a global perspective 11 **Centre special** SOLD OUT TO MISSION) Unequivocal talk from a former Baptist youth officer.. 18 **Country Focus** mb LOOKS AT THAILAND Jan Kendall's regular national overview 20 Mission file (IDEAS AND OPINIONS) Facts, figures and background resource material ${\bf 26}$ **Prayer focus** WHO AND WHAT TO PRAY FOR BMS 28:19 Action Team in Albania 28 Prayer points from BMS colleagues around the world. 30 John Passmore A SIDEWAYS LOOK Waves AN INDEPENDENT VIEW Stuart Blythe is this month's guest writer ${\bf 35}$

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Reports from around the world

(FOCUS ON FRANCE)

Challenge of mission on the Continent

FRONT COVER: A tribal elder from the Karen area of northern Thailand where the gospel is being shared by BMS worker Jacqui Wells.

Picture: BMS library

When you realise you're too old to_be a

THE TIME COMES WHEN YOU HAVE TO ADMIT YOUR MISSION TO EXPERIENCED YOUTH WORKER ALAN DODDS TELLS

t 40 years old I suggested to Rob White – the former director of British Youth for Christ – that we start a new organisation.

The SCYE – the Society of Clapped out Youth Evangelists!

Actually this was only two thirds through my time as a Christian youth worker. I got into it at 20 when I trained to be a Church Army officer.

Playing the guitar helped. In fact I had been professional in a band that backed David Bowie, then known as Dave Jones.

Having a riotous teenage life helped. My testimony still grabs young people. Sex, drugs and rock & roll abounded, then a blind date with a Christian while at Butlin's Holiday Camp in Clacton, turned me to Jesus.

Actually, Jesus turned me to Jesus in

the most dramatic way. Floods of tears, repentance, deliverance, and so on... I seemed to have the lot. I could even see in colour for the first time.

All this happened shortly after my 18th birthday, on August 16th to be precise. School had been a bore. I failed every O-level exam simply because I didn't do any work. I was "asked to leave" Bromley Tech in Kent after two terms, but that didn't matter because by then I could scrape by on income from the band.

This sort of testimony still speaks; I've been sharing it for the past 32 years. But after a while "sharing a testimony" gets a bit boring.

Certainly I trained as a Church Army officer – one of the best training courses on offer both then and now. I enjoyed theology, teaching, preaching and counselling, so my work didn't

just consist of presenting the ABC of the gospel. I remained in youth work for 25 years. It was a fabulous time. Many

young people

turned to Jesus.

In lots of ways I was much more effective as an evangelist then than I am now as an Anglican clergyman, so why give up youth work?

In my 20s it seemed the most natural thing to do. I was, after all, very near to teenage life myself, so I was in touch, as they say.

Actually, I don't think I was as good a youth worker then as I became later; you have to be stable and mature to be an effective youth worker because you are working with the most unstable age

The days of giving the youth work to the curate or the youth pastor barely out of college were bad old days.

Working with teenage girls was a distraction. I just managed to keep my hands off them, thank God, but it was a close thing sometimes. Fortunately, I met my wife, Chris, which helped a bit, but I'm afraid there was a lot of plain old fashioned lust around.

Still, the God of all grace used even

The 30s were better. Now, I kept in





YOUTH IS AT AN END. WHAT IT FELT LIKE

touch with young people simply by working with them. By now I had worked in two Anglican parishes and had become the youth worker for a large parish in Crawley, Sussex. This was the most effective time.

The youth fellowship was 60-strong, with evangelism going on all the time. The most effective work was with young men, although there were always plenty of girls around. I left the parish after five years to become a travelling evangelist in the south, but after three years burned myself out, very nearly had an affair, and came to a grinding halt.

It was 1981, and I questioned for the first time if I should remain in youth work, or even in Christian ministry at all. I went to a college of higher education, thoroughly enjoyed two years of study, applied for several non-youth work jobs and was turned down for each one.

My future lay with British Youth For Christ as its training director and, two years later, with the Crusaders as their first development worker. But by now I was nearly in my 40s. So how do you keep in touch with young people in your 40s?

I had two teenage daughters. so the house was full of teenagers – teenage videos, teenage interests, teenage ideas, teenage habits, all before my very eyes. Never had I been better informed about teenage life.

Nevertheless, even though I was still communicating well to this age group, I was beginning to feel bored with doing so. I felt trapped.

These were the tell tale signs for stopping youth work. But there was a third issue, that of British culture.

At the beginning of my work with Crusaders, I was sent out to see the work of Young Life in Colorado Springs, USA. Here youth workers were doing effective work in their 60s and so I took great heart from this. But the difference between the American young people I met and those I had left in the UK was extraordinary.

Five thousand young people and parents turned out on a snowy night for a high school football match. When

the national anthem played and the Stars and Stripes were hoisted, you could have heard a pin drop. When the evangelist told 350 young people to be silent for three minutes, I looked around. No one belched. No one giggled. Everyone was quiet.

In Britain, our youth work seemed to be more and more entertainment orientated. Our books on youth work are full of "crowd breakers", games with a meaning, how to entertain the young people in the hope that they might possibly listen. Now don't get me wrong, in a culture where it has become un-cool to sing together, you have to do something to both grab attention and unite people into the group.

It's just that I didn't want to do this any more.

I wouldn't have changed the past 25 years for the world but I'm glad I'm not doing it now.

Alan Dodds is minister of The Carpenter's Arms Anglican Fellowship, in Deal, Kent. He has had 25 years experience in youth work Alan Dodds: A time to pull back from mainstream youth mission



Let them get a DIECE of the

A FORCE WAITING TO BE RECKONED WITH... PHIL MARSDE OUT THE CHALLENGE TO INVOLVE THE YOUNG PEOPLE

here is a massive untapped resource in many of our churches today - young people.

These young activists are ready to take on the world - to fight for freedom, challenge injustice, stand up for the poor and oppressed.

They want to make a difference.

The world recognises this potential and challenges them to get involved and help others by raising money through programmes and projects like Blue Peter, Children in Need and Comic Relief.

They are encouraged to fight for their country as teenagers and give their lives sacrificially for the cause, such as was the case in Tiananmen Square.

God also saw this potential when he chose Joseph, David, Jeremiah and

Mary - all young people for whom he had great plans. When Jesus

chose his 12

young disciples he saw their potential despite the fact that he knew they

would fail and mess up along the way. Eventually they went on to do exploits and miracles in his name.

But what of the church? Do we really see and release the full potential in our young people?

Week after week we teach them and train them but the challenge is to provide them with opportunities to work out their faith and put into practice what they are learning.

Christian young people have a desire to do something radical for God. They want to be challenged and what better than the challenge Jesus himself gave to each one of us, the challenge of world mission?

The Youth and Children's Department in the BMS has been developing a three-fold strategy to help churches do this more effectively. This strategy aims to educate young people about world mission, to stimulate their interest for world mission, and to provide them with practical opportunities to participate in world mission.

The WOW club for children is designed to fulfil all of these objectives. Its full colour bi-monthly magazine

with large world map and stickers helps to educate and stimulate their interest in mission while a WOW project and WOW Action Days give

children the opportunity to get involved first hand in mission activities.

Youth roadshows aim to challenge young people to catch hold of the vision God has for their lives and put their faith into action, while the BMS 28:19 Action Team scheme gives them the opportunity to do this by spending between two weeks and two years serving God overseas.

Other mission agencies too, such as YWAM, Oasis, Youth for Christ and Operation Mobilisation have schemes specifically designed to enable young people to experience overseas mission for themselves.

But there is only so much any organisation or agency can do. The real challenge is for the local church to provide opportunities for its own young people to get involved in mission.

A trip to Cardboard City in London helping with the food runs, a dramatic youth group production taken into local schools, an open-air children's



praise party in the town centre, a visit to an old people's home, the children's wing of a hospital, an orphanage or prison or even an organised overseas trip helping to run a children's club or getting involved in beach missions . . .

All of these will help to bring your young people's faith alive and the teaching you have been providing for years will suddenly become real.

Are you ready to take up the challenge?

They are.

Phil Marsden is Youth and Children's Co-ordinator for the BMS

Thrust into leadership

DOES THE CHURCH IN A YOUNG SOCIETY TREAT YOUTH DIFFERENTLY? DEREK PUNCHARD REPORTS FROM BRAZIL

razil must be described as having a vibrant young society and this is reflected in the churches, too. The average age of congregations here must be half what it is in Britain. This has its effect on the style of worship and some of the church activities, although we find big differences from city to interior in the multi-social society.

Music plays a large part in the life of young people and in the churches they usually form groups to sing or play instruments like the electric guitar, bass and drums, and will lead a period of worship during the service. Some of the music is adapted from American or British sources but they have new music they write themselves in a Brazilian style.

Within church leadership, their participation varies. In the larger churches, they often don't get much of a look in, take little interest in church meetings and can even form young people's groups or meetings which are almost a church within a church.

In smaller churches and congregations, they are sometimes thrust into leadership and are often very effective with the enthusiasm and dedication that is typical of young people.

Life can be very intense for many of them. They are often obliged to combine working with studying to pay their way through college, which leaves them only the weekend to be taken up with church activities. Nevertheless, they participate in retreats, weekend exchanges with churches outside the state and congresses with young people from throughout the state, or the country.

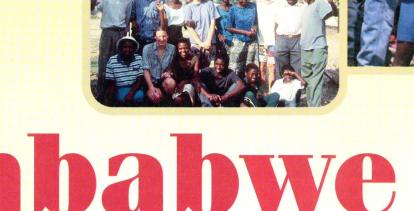
Their social life can be tied up within the church and their relationships often start within the group, too. There is still a great deal of strict morality in the friendships despite the promotion of immorality generally in society and through the media.

It is good to see young people growing up, marrying and then bringing their families up in the church.









FULL-TIME CHRISTIAN YOUTH SERVICE IS A PREPARATION FOR LEADERSHIP.

MARIANNE YOUNG TAKES STOCK A YEAR ON FROM BMS 28:19 **ACTION TEAMS**

t's over a year now since I returned from Zimbabwe back to the lung-constricting cold of an early morning April day; met at the airport by a wonderful family from my church as my own could not be there. The love that showed was amazing.

I could talk for a year about my time on BMS 28:19 Action teams; indeed on the six-week tour we recounted our experiences so many countless times that sometimes none of it felt real anymore.

Of course, it was a life changing experience and a time that I grew and learned so much about myself and God – a very intense time where I did hundreds of new things and was put in impossible circumstances with only a smattering of language and lots of prayer to

survive!

But, and this is the thing that gets so easily forgotten, there is life after 28:19! At first you have a million people to talk to and life to recapture but then the reality sinks in. Life in England has actually continued while

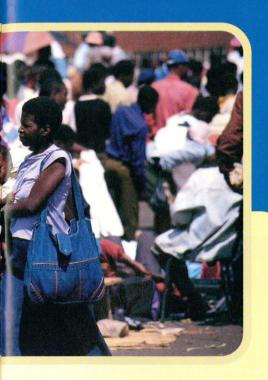
you've been away and it can be unsettling; it would be all too easy to fall away from old friends, from old life.

I think I could have fallen apart without my church.

No church is perfect but mine gave me such support and gentle care. A wonderful Spirit-filled youth group who

prayed for me, and continues to do so now I'm away at university, brought me back into the life here avoiding much of the expected culture shock.

My new-found gifts, developed in 28:19, have been more use at university, helping to run the Christian



Union and being able to live a life as worthy of God as possible in an atmosphere completely opposed to it.

I don't think views towards me have changed much. Maybe there is a subtle respect but that could be my advancing years.

My 28:19 experience prepared me for so much and I have been able to see God work through me here at university. Day by day life continues, but Zimbabwe will always be in my heart.

It was called a year out but it was so much more.

Priceless.

Marianne Young, from Leicester, and studying at Demontfort University, was a member of the 1994/5





NURTURING YOUNG DISCIPLES

I was not encouraged. Having spent every evening for two months attending what was called a discipleship class, I'd recently been baptised as a Christian. Now I was informed that, as a disciple, I would be expected to attend the mid-week prayer meeting regularly as well as hand over what I regarded as a huge portion of my all too meagre pocket money. But, in spite of these heavy demands on my time and wallet, my – I thought very reasonable – request to speak at Sunday services was dismissed out of hand and it was made very clear to me that I wouldn't be eligible to vote at church meetings until I was 18, in another three years' time.

"You're not mature enough for the responsibility involved," they told me. I could well empathise with the American revolutionary slogan: No taxation without representation!

At the time, I felt used, frustrated and belittled. Now I understand why I felt that way. It was all such a far cry from Jesus' own empowering approach to discipleship. Luke tells us that, calling his 12 rather young disciples together Jesus sent them out "to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick", Luke 9:2. But there was more to it than that.

We are so familiar with this episode that we rarely stop to think why Jesus sent his disciples out. Did his healing powers only work at short range in good atmospheric conditions? Did he have other appointments to keep? Or was he planning on taking sabbatical leave? The truth is, of course, that Jesus didn't send his disciples out primarily to preach and heal. He sent them out to learn about how to preach and heal. And they needed it. Their preaching left people confused about who Jesus was (Luke 9:7-8 and 19) – not too surprising, perhaps, when you consider that they themselves didn't fully understand who Jesus was until after the resurrection – and their healing ministry wasn't much better (Luke 9:40).

Jesus' methodology radically challenges our current thinking and practice. Most of us, if we really stopped to think about it, would conclude that Jesus' discipleship sandwich course here was thoroughly irresponsible. We wouldn't dream of letting someone preach until they had clearly demonstrated that they were ready for it. And we'd take stringent measure to ensure that the ministry of healing wasn't left in hands of novices with no first-hand experience and little pastoral sensitivity.

We exclude young people from preaching, teaching, evangelism and mission work often because, to be honest, we don't trust them. We're afraid they will create the wrong impression with others. After all, we reason, they just don't have a deep enough understanding of their own faith yet. But somewhere along the line, we have lost both our willingness to take risks and our commitment to Jesus' principles and practice. We've become like parents whose concern for their children's welfare leads them misguidedly to shelter them, not prepare them for life in the real world.

The result? Our young people grow bored and frustrated – a condition all too often mistaken for apathy by those who don't understand the young. In reality, the one thing they crave more than anything else is the feeling that they are valued and trusted with responsibility. In turn, it's our responsibility not to crush and suppress their energy but to harness and channel it constructively. To grow as Christians, young people need the oxygen which only the opportunity to practise their faith in real and adventurous ways can provide. Like Jesus' first disciples, and the rest of us, they will learn from their mistakes as they go.

Jesus sent his first 12 disciples out with power and authority, giving them the chance to practise what he preached, even though he knew that they would make a mess of the whole thing. And as if that weren't enough, far from learning his lesson as they made their mistakes, he went on to do the same thing all over again in the next chapter (Luke 10) but this time on an even bigger scale!

So, how truly Christ-like is your church in its approach to discipling the young? Steve Chalke is General Director of the Oasis Trust



Young People: A Force for

Change

THE KEY TO UNLOCK POTENTIAL IN YOUNG PEOPLE IS TRUST. SIMON HALL EXPLAINS



his was the title of a conference I attended on behalf of the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Organised by the National Youth Agency, the Home Office and other august bodies, it was a conference to celebrate young people's contribution to society, particularly in voluntary community service.

Hundreds of young people, aged 16 to 25, who were active in their local communities were invited to Westminster to . . . listen to a load of adults talking to them for two days. Before the conference was over, there had been a protest and a walkout, despite all the good intentions of the conference organisers.

This, at least, makes me feel a bit better: even the big-wigs in the secular world of youth work, the ones who talk about things like "empowerment", sometimes forget that young people are much more than just recipients of our ministry.

Recently, one of the young people with whom I work gave me a backhanded compliment: "At

last," she said smiling, "you're beginning to do youth work with me, not to me."

In recently months this girl has, with only a little support from me, established a soup-run on which about a dozen teenagers work every Saturday morning. She says that until recently she thought it was MY job to organise that sort of thing and she'd been waiting for me to sort it out for ages. As soon as she worked out that I trusted her to do it herself, she was off.

In December last year, I was part of a conference called Quo Vadis, sponsored by many youth organisations nationally. Thirty-seven young people from very different backgrounds were left together for a weekend with virtually no supervision and asked to come up with a presentation on how the church could be more relevant to young people.

"Yes, interesting," I hear you say, "but so what?"

The "so what" of Quo Vadis was what happened to some of the young people who attended the conference; the simple act of handing over control to these guys and completely trusting

them, changed them. They are no longer young people waiting to be old enough to serve God. Now they are servants of the risen Jesus, who are making waves and claiming ground in ways that are probably surprising even them.

Jesus' discipling method appears to be so different from our own. If Mark is to be believed, Jesus gathered the disciples together, told them a few stories about seeds and then sent them out to talk about the kingdom, heal the sick and raise the dead. Jesus showed a ridiculous amount of trust in these disciples - disciples who, it is true, betrayed him - because this was the best way for them to grow.

If we as churches continue to tell young people they are not old enough or not spiritual enough to serve God, they will end up believing us and give up on a religion that doesn't value them.

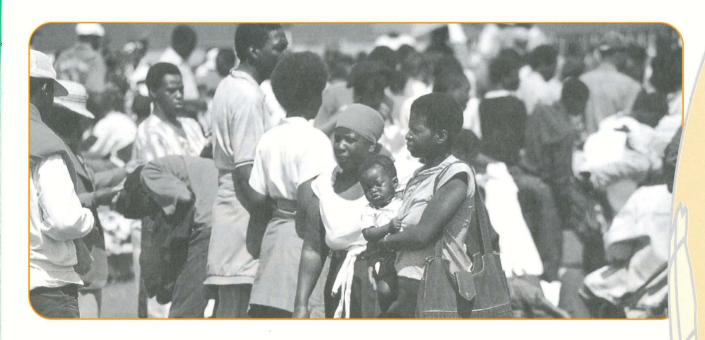
Can God use young people? Well, he's managed to use you, hasn't he?

Simon Hall is Youth Pastor at Moortown Baptist Church,



news

Forward to the millennium



A new framework for mission activity by the BMS for the next five years has been agreed by members of the General Committee, following almost a year of discussion and consultation. It comes in the form of the BMS Strategy 1996-2000 which underpins the society's commitment to holistic mission in partnership with Christians in Britain and worldwide.

Its main strategic objectives will be:

- Mission to the unevangelised and unreached.
- Emphasis on urban ministries, women's, young people's and children's work.
- Greater use of scripture, Christian literature and the media for sharing the gospel.
- Support for healing, development and education ministries.
- Commitment to the search for justice and peace by action with partner and sister agencies.

To support these objectives, BMS will be seeking to strengthen a three-fold commitment from Baptist church members throughout Britain - prayer, dedicated giving and promotion.

At the heart of all activities is prayer and the BMS will encourage supporting congregations to be persistent in prayer for its work of making Jesus known worldwide and will explore fresh ways of promoting greater involvement in prayer by supporters.

The society aims to shift the emphasis on the way it deploys mission personnel and spending to engage in mission to the unevangelised and unreached.

At present only 27% of resources are directed to countries or people groups where fewer than half the population is evangelised. The aim is to raise that to 33% by 2000 and 60% by 2020.

In areas where more than half the people have been evangelised but fewer than 60% are Christian, the BMS aims to increase resources from 7% to 12% by 2000, and to 30% by 2020.

The society plans to reduce its activity in areas where more than 60% of the population claim to be Christian from 66% at present to 55% by 2000 and to 10% by 2020.

To illustrate its vision for the next five years the BMS is to launch a video and study booklet in the autumn.

Carvings support church plants

Hand carved crafts from a Baptist community programme in Zimbabwe are helping to raise money for evangelism and church planting through the BMS Project

96, Arise and Build!

Pastor Johannes Nyanda, who was originally trained in craft production, set up the programme with four unemployed craftsmen at the village of Zvishavane in April 1985.

Now 15 craftsmen work at Umhiza Craft Centre, close to the village's Tsitsi Baptist Church, daily producing up to 75 carvings of native birds, animals and people in wood and stone. Six of the 15 are Christians and their average earnings are £25 a week.

Support for the initiative has come from Steve Seymour, who is serving with the BMS in Harare, providing business training and development, which helps efforts to combat the country's unemployment problem. Fewer than three per cent of Zimbabwe's 300,000 school leavers are expected to get a job.

Carvings from the Umhiza craftsmen are being imported for sale through the BMS Project 96 Arise and

Build! thanks to the efforts of BMS General

Committee member Stan Crees, of Wallington, Surrey. This provides an alternative outlet to small markets in Zimbabwe and proceeds from their sale will help to reach the Project 96 fund target of £,36,500.

The church in Zimbabwe aims to reach everyone in the country with the gospel by the year 2000.

 Carvings are individually priced and cost between £15 and £30 Details about ordering are available from Christine Neilson, BMS Literature Secretary, on

01235 512077.

Attractively designed Arise and Build! postcards are also available at six for f, 1 in aid of Project 96.



A request to Tools With a Mission (TWAM) for 150 African hoes and a visit by BMS General Committee member Stan Crees to a neighbour's house should be expected to have nothing in common...ordinarily.

Except on this occasion.

The local Liberia Prayer and Action Group in Staffordshire had approached TWAM to provide farming tools for development work linked with an evagelistic programme organised by Agape Ministries in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia.

There was no problem with run-of-the-mill impliments but when it came to the African hoe - a cross between a spade and a pick-axe - TWAM just hadn't any in stock.

And there was little hope of finding one, let alone the 150 needed by the Liberian Prayer and Action Group. There didn't seem to be much call for this kind of tool in

Its members considered applying for a grant to buy some but after discussing this at their monthly prayer meeting, they decided not to ask for cash but to pray that God would supply their need in some other way.

And so they prayed.

That weekend Stan Crees made a social call on neighbour Gulshan

Esmail in the London suburb of Wallington. She has lived in Britain ever since fleeing Ugandan dictator Idi Amin's reign of terror in the late 1960s. "She was soon to emigrate to Canada and had a few

tools in her shed that might be useful to TWAM," said Stan. "I poked my head round the door and I was pleased to see a stack of tools."

They'll come in handy to someone, thought Stan, as he sorted through several hundred pieces of rusting ironmongery.

"They're African hoe heads", he heard Gulshan explain. "About 270 of them from an export venture which came to an end 20 years ago."

When Stan reported his find to Jack Norwood, development officer with the Baptist Men's Movement. which runs TWAM, he could hardly believe his ears.

"Jack said he'd just had a call asking for African hoes and could I ring Sylvia in Staffordshire!" said Stan. "You can just imagine the kind of conversation we had - two complete strangers talking about African hoes and God's marvellous provision.

"I had no idea about Sylvia's group's need when I looked at those rusty tools in Gulshan's shed. For me, this was a challenging experience which has renewed my determination to take prayer more seriously."



Hoe down: Gulshan Esmail and Stan Crees examine some of the 270 African hoe heads found in her shed

President goes on tour

Newly elected BMS president Carolyn Green launched her national roadshow at the BUGB Assembly in Blackpool. Carolyn wants to reach three groups of people in churches and there will be activities for each of these

Ministers and church leaders are being invited to breakfasts and lunches; the first three were in southern England on May 30, 31 and June 1, when Carolyn and her team, met some 80 leaders for breakfasts at Woodley

Baptist Church, Reading, Thornhill Baptist Church, Southampton, and Kidlington Baptist Church, Oxford.

Carolyn, keen to thank those who work for BMS at local level, is holding informal receptions the first of which was taking place at Avenue Baptist Church, Southend, on Saturday June 29, when mission secretaries, birthday scheme organisers, and many others gathered.

The third group – everyone in church fellowships – are being invited to share in joyful celebrations of faith and commission. The first followed the reception at Southend with worship led by Colin Waller, of Earls Hall Baptist Church, and keynote speakers Martin Hewitt from Brazil and John Passmore, BMS Europe Representative.

Future events are planned for Kent and Sussex in September and in the Greater London area during October •

 For more details of events, see your missionary secretary, or telephone Derek Mucklow on 0181 393 6017 or Jim Clarke on 01353 778984.



01235 512077

Hundreds of BMS supporters collect stamps for the society's Stamp Bureau, which raises thousands of pounds every year. But how many know that tea cards, cigarette cards, coins and other collectibles can help to raise cash, too?

Our new Stamps and Collectibles leaflet gives full details.

A new BMS Birthday Scheme promotion is

Christine Neilson — Off the shelf

under way. Already, four new birthday card designs have been produced for birthday scheme organisers to send out; these are available now. On the press at the moment is a new campaign pack of leaflets, posters, gift envelopes and birthday registers. Telephone to order yours now.

Roots to Life, the 1996 Harvest resources pack is available this month. And

we've kept the price at £,5 for the third year in succession. The pack supports the BMS-Operation Agri-BMM harvest appeal and contains a stack of ideas and activities - plus a set of overhead projector slides and commentary tape – using two agricultural projects as a

Telephone for an order form.

Relief fund aid for tornado

A BMS relief fund grant of £5,000 was made to the **Bangladesh Baptist Sangha to** help Christians meet the needs of people struck by a tornado in May.

More than 500 people were killed and at least 100,000 injured as winds of up to 125mph drove a swathe of destruction across the nation. Trees and homes were tossed into the air, tin roofs fell on victims like guillotines and at least three villages were swept

Witnesses reported seeing a fire-red funnel appear in the western sky just before the tornado struck. It lasted only 20 minutes but its aftermath is still being felt.

The Baptist Sangha Social **Health and Education Development Board (SHED)** has been visiting the worst-hit areas and is expected to report fully to the BMS.

The SHED action came just a month after it reported back on its action, following last year's floods, to help with house repairs, create temproary jobs, help affected farmers with land cultivation and rebuild boundary walls. •

Joint mission

A joint mission in Llandudno, organised by English and Welsh speaking fellowships of all denominations, heard evangelist Robert Cunville, a minister from North East India.

There is a link between Robert and North Wales: Presbyterian missionaries took the gospel to the Khasia Hills and Shillong 150 years ago and was returning to the country to which he and his family owe their Christian



JAMAICA: A call for a national **Commission Against Waste and** Corruption was made at the 146th **Baptist Assembly by the Revd Eron Henry.** He cited drug trading and money laundering as forms of institutional corruption and said progressive legislation introduced was insufficient to stem the tide. He blamed flaws in the Jamaican constitution and called for legislation to fence in the government and restrict corrupt practices. A commission, he said, should have powers to investigate, prosecute, try and sentence. He challenged the church to set an example to repudiate corrupt lifestyles. (JBR)

ISRAEL: An appeal has been made for volunteers to work at the Baptist Village **Conference Centre in Tel Aviv. The centre** is used principally for conferences but during holiday periods, it is home to youth camps, and during the summer needs a larger number of volunteers. Volunteer workers help with ground keeping, housekeeping, cooking, dining responsibilities, maintenance, building and life-guarding for the swimming pool. **Accommodation and expenses are** provided. (Contact: EBF, PO Box 405, NL-9200, Drachten, Netherlands). (EBPS)

NEW ZEALAND: Churches are being encouraged to evangelise international backpackers, thousands of whom visit the islands annually to follow their worldfamous wilderness trails. Through the Oxford-based Backpackers for Jesus, former world traveller George Probek is recruiting Christians to take to the footways and share their faith with fellow travellers, and to help churches learn how to reach walkers who pass through their towns. (YWAM News)

AUSTRALIA: Baptists are preparing for an attendance of 15,000 at the next **Baptist World Congress in Melbourne in** 2000. The organising team is looking upon the congress as kick-starting a new millennium of evangelistic possibilities. **Denton Lotz, General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, said: "We want to** be so enriched by our meeting that we'll go out and spread further the gospel of Jesus Christ." (EBPS)

A SPECIAL REPORT FROM ROBERT ATKINS, BMS WORKER IN FRANCE

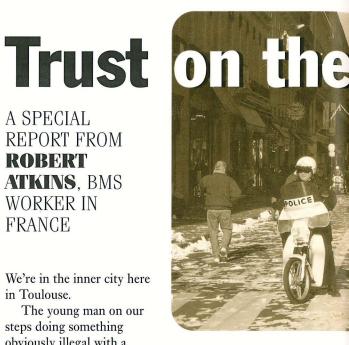
We're in the inner city here in Toulouse.

The young man on our steps doing something obviously illegal with a tourniquet and a syringe; the problem of reeking men sleeping on the doorstep of the Chapelle des Capitouls. I came up with the gentlemanly solution of letting them sleep their fill and then offering them a cup of tea – a typically British gesture.

These people are SDFs – Sans Domicile Fixe, or of no fixed abode. They make even the briefest sortie from the chapel, to get a newspaper or something, into an obstacle course of alsatians, vendors and those just begging with an empty saucepan or paper cup.

SDF – some of the most eloquent initials in the French language. "No thanks, I've just given." These words should be in every phrase book alongside: "My postillion has been struck by lightning."

One of the SDFs stumbled into the chapel after the Sunday service one day. This would be a couple of months before one of their number froze to death behind Toulouse station and a couple more months before another was burned alive in a Paris street.

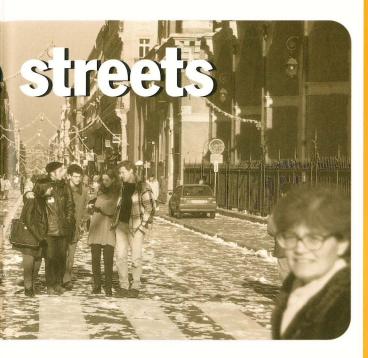


This one was in a bad way through a mixture of alcohol, drugs, mental imbalance, woman trouble and some spiritual difficulty. We were the only people he could think of turning to and, after all, we'd given him a cup of coffee back in the summer so he felt he could trust us.

His name was Jacques, and he is in his mid-forties, although it was hard to make much of his incoherent ramblings - I knew four years of Spurgeon's College sermon class would come in handy.

Jacques began to see us more regularly, that is to say he'd come a couple of days and then vanish for a fortnight or so. Then, just for once, a family who came to the Sunday service returned a second time! In fact, they decided to stay! Remarkable.

Even more remarkable is the background of this couple, Pierre and Marie and two-year-old Naomi. Pierre has had a lot of trouble with drugs and has spent time in prison as well as living rough for about 10 years. He was the ideal



person to help with Jacques. He knew the system.

Little by little, Jacques calmed down. He stopped raving about strangling his ex-woman friend. He began to express a desire to use fewer chemicals – under medical supervision. If only he had a roof of his own. You'd never believe what 22 years of living on the streets can do to a man.

Our smart-looking young student, Nirina, subscribes to an agency which allows you to browse an exclusive list of accommodation for rent. So we allowed him to speak to the bemused agency proprietor who, quite understandably, wanted to know why his client was accompanied by three tramps — Pierre dresses casually and I hadn't shaved that morning.

We phoned the first number, a ridiculously cheap flat at only 900 francs a month. I can hardly believe it's true; the social services will cover the cost for someone like Jacques but by rights it should be impossible to persuade a landlord to accept someone like him on the inevitably flimsy guarantees that a man like him – and a chapel like us – can furnish. Not this time. Pierre and Nirina sort it out within a week.

We see Jacques most days now for coffee and a frenetic game of table football. He explains what it was like to grow up in Paris in the sixties, with appropriate linguistic illustrations. Then suddenly he was orphaned. Little by little we come to understand why Jacques is as he is . . .

Another group of SDFs drop by at the Chapelle. They're younger and still more marginal than Jacques. They all have large ferocious dogs which alone prevent them from being housed in any of the numerous hostels for homeless people. What odours! What slang! What camaraderie!

We've been chatting with the Salvation Army just up the road and we think we can do something together for these people. In the winter they give breakfasts on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, so we are looking into doing the same thing on Mondays and Tuesdays to fill the gaps. •

Update

STILL NO TOTAL BAN...

Already 100 million landmines have been laid and it is estimated that the same number are stockpiled.

In 1993 it cost \$70 million to clear 100,000 landmines, (average \$700 each). It costs as little as \$3 to produce one.

Brigadier Paddy Blagden, the UN's British mines expert says that every 15 minutes of every day, someone, somewhere will step on an anti-personnel mine.

In Cambodia there are reckoned to be four million landmines and there are already 30,000 amputees there.

These are stark statistics and while it is good that the UK government has given almost £17 million for mine clearance, only a complete ban will offer a real solution. The position of the UK government is that authorised research into anti-personnel mines will continue, and that self-destruct mines will continue to be made available to responsible countries.

The follow-up to the Inhumane Weapons Convention held in April resulted in an increase in the number of

countries agreeing to a total ban on landmines from 16 to 39, but the UK is not among them.

In theory non-detectable mines have now been banned, while "smart" or detectable mines can continue, providing the minefields are marked. However a nine year period of grace has been allowed for the ban on non-detectable mines, and the proviso that smart minefields are to be marked unless military operations prevent it being done means that innocent people will continue to be killed or maimed.

The BMS has passed a resolution calling on the international community to introduce a total ban on the production, sale, transfer, export, stockpiling and use of all anti-personnel land mines, and to ensure that satisfactory control measures are enforced and necessary funding made available.

Peter Briggs, chairman of the BMS Justice and Peace Advisory Group



LEFT: Toulouse — on the street

BELOW: Hand-sized disc of death — a land mine



Fairly traded

A coffee morning held by Wrexham Baptist Church mission committee was no ordinary affair, for the emphasis was on fair trading. The coffee, tea and even chocolate on offer all carried the Fair Trade symbol and it was all in aid of mission.

The church is active in support of charity; the women's

meeting knits jumpers and blankets and helps the organisation Teddies for Tragedies. And members and friends collect stamps and coins for the BMS Stamp Bureau.

Pictured are mission committee team: (back row) Pat Mitchell, Rose Woosnam and Mike Brain, (front row) Jean Brain, Helen Paddock, minister Nigel Thomas and John Mitchell.



Dates for your diary

If you are organising a world mission event open to visitors, and would like it publicised in this diary, please let us have details at least three months in advance. Drop us a line at: Diary Dates, World Mission Link, BMS, PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA. Alternatively, telephone on 01235 512077.

Presidential tour

In September Carolyn Green will be in the South Eastern Area. Saturday 14 September at Horsham (venue to be announced) At the Cutting Edge – a celebration Details: Presidential Tour Co-ordinator Jim Clarke

Leicester BMS Auxiliary Summer Event at Arnesby 31 August - Saturday Details: John & Shirley Russell 0116 241 6299

Worcester Women's Rally at Sansome Walk 10 September - Tuesday Details: Lavinia Hand 01527 520136

WMA Bilingual Conference at Swansea University Conference 10-13 September

Centre. Theme: God's Secret Plan Details: Delyth Wyn Davies 01766 512957

Shropshire Women's Auxiliary Rally at Ludlow 21 September - Saturday Details: Ivy Jones 01952 506933

Nottingham BMS Support Group Children's Weekend 27-29 September at Mansfield Road, Nottingham "WOW be a Globetrotter" Details: Joan Manicom 0115 962 3235

WOW Action Days For dates, see back cover.

Mud in the cause of mission

If anyone can tell you how they live in Zaire, the voungsters of Davbrook Baptist Church, Nottingham, can.

They have tramped in mud with bare feet to make models of African houses.

They have carried water jars on their heads.

They have prepared African fruit for lunch...

All at a WOW Weekend run at their church.

WOW team leader Wendy Pearson, who drew on BMS WOW Club children's resources for the action-packed weekend, said 40 youngsters took part in a quiz about life in Zaire, a praise party, workshops to make models of African homes and a drama based on Kieze's story in the BMS video Monsters, Monkeys and a Big Big Spider.

And to top it

all, BBC Radio Nottingham came along to do a live broadcast of the WOW Weekend water carrying race – using containers carried on their heads.

Worship on the Sunday morning had an African flavour and children reported to the congregation on the activities of the weekend.

"We had a super time," said Wendy. "The only problem is, they want to do it all over again!"

• The WOW magazine and club is run by the BMS to inspire and motivate children in world mission. Resources are available to help with special churchorganised WOW events.

Mission partnership

Meet Dr and Mrs Simon Collins. BMS missionary Simon and his fiancee, Karen Hedge, were married at Sittingbourne Baptist Church where they met when Simon made a World Mission Link visit last year. Simon, from East Grinstead, Sussex, and Karen, whose parents live in Stevenage, Herts, spent their honeymoon in the

on world mission for churches...

Mission Link



Making an African home at **Daybrook WOW weekend**



Lake District before travelling to Blackpool to attend the BUGB Baptist Assembly. Karen was a teacher in Sittingbourne before being accepted as a missionary by BMS General Committee in March. They both feel a strong call of God on their lives to service overseas and, after language training in Portugal, they will move to Angola later this year where they will set up a community health scheme.

999 calls . . . with a difference

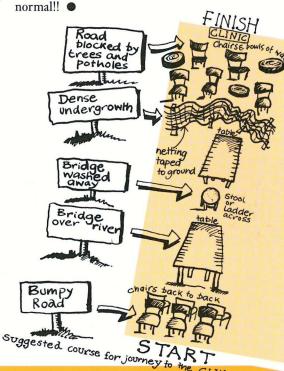
An idea for a summer event - learning can be fun. Set up an obstacle course using chairs, tables, nets, buckets of water and any other articles easily available. Each obstacle represents a problem, eg: chairs are logs blocking the path, netting poisonous undergrowth, buckets of water a marshy area where straying off the path is dangerous, narrrow bench a bridge. Be imaginative but safe; here is what one group did – see plan, right.

Form teams of at least five people per team. When it is their turn each team will be given a small ladder. Explain to

the teams what is going to happen:

One of your group is very ill and has to be carried on the ladder to the nearest clinic. You have five health points but every time your "patient" touches any of the obstacles, ie hits the bumps in the road, gets wet crossing the river, a point is lost. If the "patient" is to have any chance of survival they have to get to the clinic as soon as possible and with at least one health point left.

If two parallel courses can be arranged that increases the excitement and involvement. And, if it rains and the event is outdoors – remember that in the rainy season in Asia that would be quite



Dear Audrey...

Here's a letter that is surely irresistible, it ends with love and kisses It's summer time - even the post bag is rejoicing! - I feel better already. Can we do anything to help? Well in this case we can, as they want to join a Link-Up group and are not sure of the nearest one. I give the details but then the serious question - do I

And here's a thank you letter. No, not to me, but from a missionary send love and kisses in my reply! to all the groups they'd visited, thanking them for all the support, help, fun and surprises – like the time the bulb blew in the projector (they did an impromptu quiz instead); or being greeted with "You don't look like a missionary" (music to a missionary's ear!); or the birthday cake presented on the right day but without the candles

And here's one from a relieved Contact person after a Link-Up visit. She'd never organised one before but it had gone really well, though she'd been a bit worried about the missionary going down with flu-(very tactful). the youth group had organised a walk as part of the visit and were determined to go through with it in spite of the rain. The missionary put on walking shoes and a brave face and got very, very wet!! Thank you missionary for making the young people's day.

DARRELL JACKSON CALMLY WEIGHS WHAT HE SAYS BEFORE HE SAYS IT; YOU CAN ALMOST SEE HIM APPLYING QUIET CEREBRAL MEASUREMENT. THE CONVERSATION MAY BE INFORMAL BUT IT'S AS CAREFUL AND PRECISE AS DARRELL NEEDS TO BE WHEN HE'S SCALING A ROCK FACE OR ICE **CLIMBING – JUST ONE OF HIS ACTIVE PURSUITS.**

WITH DARRELL THERE IS NO COMPROMISE WHEN IT COMES TO COMMITMENT; IT'S ALL OR NOTHING - SOMETHING FOR WHICH YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE WEST COUNTRY WILL HAVE COME TO KNOW HIM DURING HIS THREE YEARS AS BAPTIST ASSOCIATION YOUTH OFFICER FOR DEVON AND CORNWALL.

DARRELL, WHO GREW UP ON THE ISLE OF MAN, TRAINED AT THE LONDON BIBLE COLLEGE. IN NORTHWOOD, MIDDLESEX, BEFORE BEING CALLED TO THE PASTORATE OF A GROUP OF CHURCHES IN EAST DARTMOOR, DEVON, IN 1989. TWO YEARS LATER HE MARRIED CLAIR, A TEXTILE ARTIST. EARLIER THIS YEAR HE WAS APPOINTED EVANGELISM CO-ORDINATOR WITH THE BAPTIST UNION

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

ow on earth did you manage to find us?" I had found the small congregation meeting in the local school only through careful inquiry and sheer determination. Being greeted with this question, I politely held back from asking in return: "Why didn't you find us?"

Why do newly arrived residents on a new estate rarely get to hear about the services offered by the local church? So far we've received several local newsletters, had calls from various opportunist salesmen, vet nothing from any of the town's churches. This is prime territory. New housing. Easy ground to cover. The only consolation for our local church is that, so far, the Jehovah's Witnesses haven't found us either!

Why is it that mission is often only an agenda item at church meetings?

When I married Clair in 1991 we were able to visit Zimbabwe and meet up with former college friends. Another trip in 1993 to the International Youth Conference gave further opportunity to visit and work alongside Christians in Zimbabwe. They taught me that for the church to grow and nurture its vitality it has to spend and be spent in mission. This saw an outworking in the setting aside of church planters and the planting of churches that were there for the community. Our group of young British volunteers helped build a playground on a church plot for the benefit of children from the surrounding township.

This same small group of British young people returned to the UK and committed themselves to offering financial support to this church

planting programme. What they had experienced was a church that was as committed to gospel proclamation as it was to enacting it and they found it infectious.

There are many strands drawn from my own experiences that have contributed to the vision for mission that I have for the British church. I spent four happy years as a pastor in Devon and had to approach mission in five rural towns and villages in five different ways. Culturally they appeared similar vet each demanded a distinctive approach. The impetus for mission was the same in each. The programmes and methods were very different.

Unable to leave the beautiful South West behind I spent the next two and a half years working as the youth officer for Devon & Cornwall. Three issues



IF WE WERE ABLE TO SLICE THROUGH GOD'S HEART WE WOULD FIND THE WORD MISSION WRITTEN IN BOLD TYPE.

became clear as I worked with young people.

Firstly, young people will usually respond positively to a presentation of the Christian faith that attempts to engage with their world.

Secondly, young Christians will respond more readily to the challenge to church involvement where adult church members are modelling mission attitudes. It takes adult church members with mission attitudes to mentor young Christians with a willingness to serve. But I found that young people do not want to serve the church, they want to serve others through the church.

Thirdly, young people want church to be the place where they can be themselves, where they can express something of what it is to be human. Sadly, I have seen too many churches dehumanise young people by demanding that they conform to manmade norms. The mission-minded church has successfully created space for young and old to express what it is to be uniquely and individually made in the image of God.

Home or overseas, the church is God's instrument for mission. Society and Union have the same commission. Now, as the BUGB Evangelism Coordinator I am so grateful that God has prepared my heart for home mission through exposure to overseas mission and experience of cultures in Africa and throughout continental Europe.

Each one of these cultures needs the redeeming power of the gospel to touch it. Proclamation and enactment of the gospel in each is shaped by that culture. Our post-everything British culture demands we take a fresh look at our mission. New methods are



certainly needed but of themselves are not enough.

What our society needs first and foremost are church communities renewed by the Spirit of Jesus, living as communities of Jesus' transforming love and presence, and offering this life and love to others.

A radical change of attitude is called for. A new way of understanding and being church beckons.

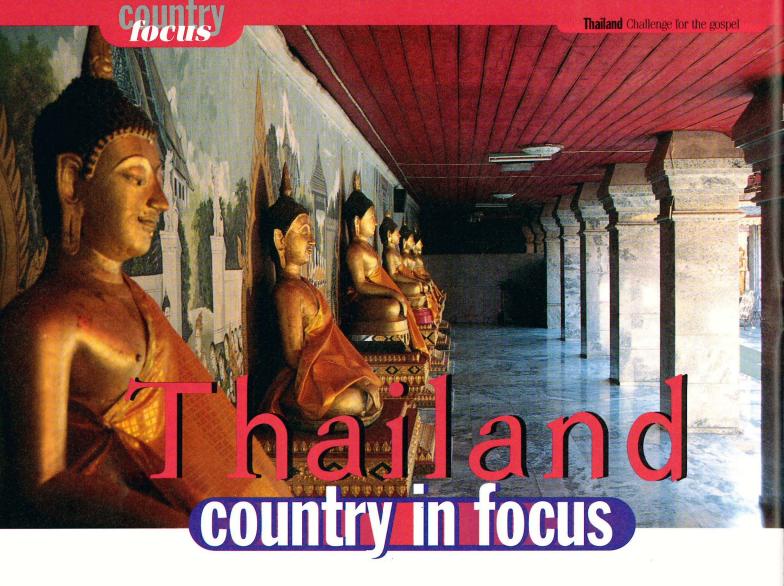
If we were able to slice through God's heart we would find the word MISSION written in bold type. I want to be able to slice through the collective heart of every Baptist church in Britain and find there the same word.

When we do find it there we can then be confident that the church has become all that God wants it to be.

Darrell Jackson is Evangelism Co-ordinator for the Baptist Union of Great Britain at Baptist House, Didcot



DARRELL IMAGES FROM HIS LIFE - IN BAPTISM, WITH OUNG PEOPLE AND IN HIS NATIONAL **MINISTRY**



hailand, whose name means Land of the Free is shaped like an elephant's head and trunk, and has an area slightly smaller than France. It has been described as the most exotic country in Asia.

It seems there has been a core of civilisation in this area predating Mediterranean and Chinese civilisations. Thailand has been a kingdom since 1283 – called Siam – with its capital at Ayuthia. Recently the army has dominated politics and commercial life, but its violent suppression of pro-democracy demonstrations in 1992 led to its humiliation.

There followed an election of a civilian government committed to dealing with corruption and diminishing army influence in politics. The present capital Bangkok is known as Krung Thep – the city of Angels – and is the largest city in Thailand.

Chiang Mai, where BMS missionary Jacqui Wells is based, is Thailand's second largest city with a population of 250,000.

Rice is the major export and main crop, but farmers are often paid inadequately and as a result, they often live below the poverty line.

Poverty has often forced parents to send their children out to work, and in some occupations children under the age of 10 outnumber those between 10 and 19. Others are lured away or even kidnapped and taken to the cities where they are sold into prostitution slavery. It is estimated there are 100,000 male and 700,000 female prostitutes operating in Bangkok, and AIDS is now a major concern; a higher number of AIDS cases is reported in Thailand than in any of the other countries of South East Asia.

Economic growth has been rapid since 1960 and farmers in the uplands began to grow maize, cassava, jute and sugar cane. Irrigation schemes were brought in to extend the growing season and tractors began to replace buffalo.

At the same time the country's

forest area shrank from 60 per cent to 20 per cent leading to soil erosion and a ban on commercial logging in the rain forests. There are also other economic problems: the Gulf of Thailand is being overfished, and Bangkok itself is sinking a little each year because the underground water supplies are drying up.

Thailand also has around 100,000 refugees, including some Hmong Laotians and Cambodians remaining from the previous fighting in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. Others are more recent, Karen and Burmese people fleeing from repression in neighbouring Myanmar (Burma).

The Thai people, in the main, have not responded to the gospel, but the tribal peoples living in the north of the country have. The Karen are the largest hill tribe group living in Thailand, and three per cent of them are Christian,. One of their church's main goals is to take the gospel to all of the Karens in Thailand before the year 2000.



THAILAND: Location, facts and figures



Area 513,120 sq km
Capital Bangkok (Krung
Thep) pop. 6,450,000
Population 59,605,000
(1995); estimate for
year 2000 65 million

People groups Thai 78%, Chinese 12%, Malay 4%, Mon-Khmer 4% Others 2% (Meo-Yao, Tibeto-Burman which includes Karen, Lahu, Akha, and Lisu peoples)

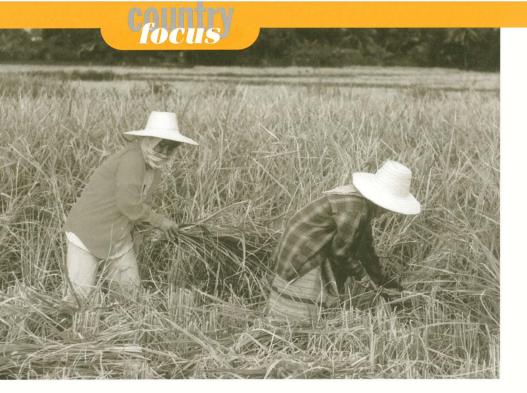
Religion Buddhist 93%, Muslim 4%, Chinese religions 2%, Christian 1%

Health One doctor for every 4360 people

Calorie consumption 198% of required intake

Safe water 93% of the population has access **Literacy** 89%





Slow progress for the Gospel

Vision for

growth

amid

social

erosion

Although there has been a marked increase in interest in the gospel in Thailand during the past 20 years, Christians are still waiting for the spiritual breakthrough. Despite 160 years of intensive mission effort, progress is slow.

A barrier seems to be the strong social cohesiveness of Buddhism; Christianity appears foreign to a nation whose lifestyle is dominated by a Buddhist culture. However, there is evidence of disillusionment among many at the emptiness of **Buddhism and an increase** in emphasis on evangelism and church growth.

A challenge to the small church in Thailand - there are 24.000 **Buddhist temples but only 2,000 small** Christian congregations - is a real bondage of demonic powers and the power of sin in society.

Behind Buddhism is a complex world of venerated and feared spirits. Many homes and business premises in Thailand have "spirit houses" outside to appease the spirits. These models, mounted on poles, reflect the size and quality of the family home and are replaced by more elaborate models when the family

improve the home or move.

The idea is that the spirits need a place to live; rather than occupy the family home, they provide them with a home of their own.

Corruption, drugs and violence are evidence of social erosion in Thai society

> but there is no concept of a need to repent.

The church has suffered from nominalism, backsliding, a lack of discipline and even misuse of funds but there are encouraging signs. There is growing evidence of urban and rural evangelism, church planting and Bible teaching as churches catch the vision for growth.

However, churches are more numerous in the north, in Bangkok and among tribal minorities. Jacqui Wells serves with the BMS in northern Thailand, in a teaching role among Karen tribe women while BMS colleagues Geoff and Chris Bland work with students of the Bangkok Institute of Theology, helping to prepare a new generation of potential Christian workers.

Angus and Carol MacNeill have been involved in Christian education and health work in the remote Sangklaburi area.

ANGUS MACNEILL TRIES TO LOOK AT IT FROM THEIR PERSPECTIVE

t is one of those questions that will not go away. On the face of it, there should be no problem. The positive answer leaps out, but I suspect that it leaps out too easily and superficially. We do, after all, have a tendency to produce trained, pat

Better to go carefully - especially with this question.

But before facing up to the question, the scene has to be set - and there is our first problem.

Scene-setting is notoriously difficult, made up as it always is, by selected data. Tell me about your house and I will probably get a fair idea of what it is like, even though you forget to tell me the colour of your bedroom wall and somehow omit the fact that you have got one of those tune-playing doorbells.

But ask me to tell you what it is like to live in your house so that, like you, I can get an "inside" feel for it all, and you can see what I mean when I say that scene-setting is notoriously difficult.

After all, I can hardly be expected to view your living- room or lounge in the way that you do. I never lived through the riotous Christmas Party that you held there, nor was I present when you got that telephone call that led to tears and sadness. Nor did I sit in one of the easy chairs over months and years relaxing at the end of a working day, reading the newspaper, doing the crossword puzzle, watching TV and listening to the stories of an entertaining visitor.

To me, it is just another room, no doubt a nice one at that, but I do not have the same feel for it as you have.

What chance then do we have of grasping what it is like to live at Huey



A bit different

Phaak in Western Thailand?

It's not far from the border with Burma in the midst of forested hills. There is a valley running up to the left of the village and the stream (the Huey, that is) has been dammed to form a small reservoir.

Even in the dry months of January and February, there is still some green to be seen near the water. For the most part, however, at this time of the year the ground is brown and dry with clouds of dust hanging over the road every time a vehicle passes. To the east, the countryside is more open, stretching out towards the coastal plain not too far away.

Is a picture forming in your mind

"Yes", you reply, as you think of a place that you once visited on holiday and settle back to fit in the other pieces of description that I am bound to give you, into that over-all reference frame.

And there we have it, our first difficulty, because it is not anything like the place you are thinking of.

"Well," you say, "go on, try me." Very well. The bamboo houses are on stilts with a small ladder-like stair leading up to the floor of the house. There is no furniture but a mat will be put out for you to sit on once you have left your shoes at the bottom of the ladder and climbed into the house.

The house will have a thatch roof and if you are unfortunate enough to be in a richer householder's house, you will wish that he had kept thatch for his roof, rather than switch to the status-bearing tin roof.

A faded calendar hangs on one wall with a few old photographs beside it. From somewhere, has come a colourful poster about the dangers of drugtaking which is looked at from the

opposite wall by a large picture of a bowlerhatted, European suitclad, drooping

moustached Thai gentleman of vestervear.

Underneath the house you can hear a couple of dogs having a scuffle and a hen squawking out of their way.

How is the picture getting on?

"Sort of," you say. "I'm getting a rough idea in my mind from a picture I remember seeing in a geographical magazine."

Well maybe, but what I am describing is probably not like that either. Still, I'll keep going for a bit.

The village has people, of course; small build in the main, sturdy legs but the kind of legs that knot into a crosslegged position without any bother.

Clothes are a bit rough-and-ready for ordinary wear, but more up-market in quality and colour for special occasions. Hands are working hands – no manicuring in this village. Brown eyes are bright and no-one's ribs are sticking out. Things are organised and there is food and land to cultivate.

When the visitor arrives, everybody gathers round. There is no embarrassment at the unexpected visitor, no muttering behind covered mouths about how inconvenient it is. Instead, it's out with a few bottles of luke-warm Coca Cola for a minicelebration. Naturally, there is a bit of beetel nut chewing and spitting going

BELOW: **Angus MacNeill**

BOTTOM: Think of a church building - and Thailand will provide a different picture

And there we have it — our first difficulty — because it's not anything like the place you are thinking of.





foreign

as well but that is par for the course.

Is the picture more or less complete now?

"More or less," you say, trying hard to wrap your imagination around a situation that seems to have no reference points to your town, street or neighbours. After all, when last did your neighbour spit beetel nut

juice over your garden wall?

Now we can ask the big question at last. What does it mean to be a Christian in this environment?

Is there a distinctive quality of Christian living to be seen in this village? In what essential way will the life of Christians in Huey Phaak, a village similar to all others in the area, be different?



As a westerner living and working in Thailand for the moment, I continue to stumble with these questions. It is obvious that I should not be looking for some kind of transplant of western-style church activity. Not for the Huey Phaaks of this world are the church committees, social evenings with an interesting speaker, seminars, conferences,



coffee mornings, profound discussions at the weekly house group, hunger lunches . . .

But then, the incarnate son of God did not live in that kind of church activity whirl either.

I still have only the glimmer of a feeling for what it is like to live and be raised in this kind of village. How will the love of God in Christ take on flesh in this situation? What do worship and prayer mean for this people? Where does shalom (peace and wholeness) find entrance? What does the command "You shall be my witnesses" mean for these simple villagers?

I have much to learn as I strain to see the Kingdom of God rooted in conditions so different from my cultural background.

But, I am not quite finished yet.

There is a church building in Huey Phaak, still sporting the banner, Merry Christmas 1991, over the doorway. It is not much of a building – a simple bamboo structure with an earthen floor and no pretensions. It is the one visible sign of the Christian presence in this village; nothing elaborate, nothing much to boast about. But was I imagining things when I thought I had a glimpse of a simply clad, simple-speaking, rough-handed Christ sitting on one of the bamboo benches?

The King at home among his people.

The light begins to dawn.

When the King is there, it is only at the edges that things are just a bit a different, not at the centre.

Angus and Carol MacNeill serve with the BMS in Sangklaburi, western Thailand

RICHARD WELLS DISCOVERS A GREAT RESPECT BY THAILAND FOR ITS ROYAL FAMILY

arch 10 1996 was a key date in the royal calendar of Thailand. It was the day that HRH the Princess Mother's body was cremated. It was also a day that allowed the rest of the world a glimpse of the high regard in which the nation holds its royal family.

Beamed across the globe were satellite television pictures of a nation in mourning for their beloved Princess Mother. Viewers tuned in to the news channels would have seen the result of elaborate preparations for the funeral - a 4,000-strong procession involving the royal family, high-ranking Buddhist monks, civil servants, soldiers and schoolchildren, and an ornate and delicately crafted crematorium, specially constructed close to the grounds of the royal palace in Bangkok.

That alone, a labour of devotion by hundreds of artisans over many months, provides indisputable evidence of royal fervour unmatched in western kingdoms - and certainly not in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Far from a preoccupation with the private lives of royal family members, the Press in Thailand reflects the people's love of their King and Queen; the Bangkok Post devoted a front and back page in colour to a detailed description of the Princess Mother's funeral preparations but if there was any room for fabrication based on rumours of a playboy lifestyle by the crown prince, it would not have been found in Thailand's newspapers.

The cynic might argue that this is the result of a heavy official hand bent upon using the media as a propaganda tool. But the royal family's story of active concern for their subjects is powerfully persuasive.

Take the Princess Mother; records show that in her early years, visits to remote parts of the Thai kingdom where the lifestyle of the people is plain and poor, had such a profound effect on her that she was moved to live a more simple, rural life. Her action was a clear visual aid to the majority of the 52 million population with whom she was identifying; she began to understand and empathise with their situations, and devoted large portions of her personal wealth to build, equip and staff schools for their children.

Small wonder that hundreds of craftsmen were willing to carve 20,000 pieces of timber to decorate a 30-metre high structure to honour her memory; a structure which was never intended to be permanent but be dismantled just a few days after her funeral.



Herefully Leasing

The present king, who celebrates 50 years on the throne, is just as fondly regarded – a monarch of high integrity, commanding a good deal of respect and having a strong unifying and stabilising role nationally. He carries on his mother's work among rural communities, not out of an imperious sense of duty but from personal interest.

He takes a great interest not only in things educational but also agricultural. In the palace grounds in central Bangkok the king has established an agricultural research centre and personally oversees the development and testing of crop varieties which will be more effective and productive. When he suggests their adoption by farming communities, they can be confident of success because the royal green fingers have tried them first.

The consequence of his concern for people's welfare and his command of their respect is that the king has more of an influence in the country's political affairs than western monarchs, a fact that becomes clear from an eight-facet display of his life in the centrepiece of The King's Park, Bangkok's equivalent of St James' Park, London. Here, in picture window displays on the external walls of an octagonal conference centre, are recorded key aspects of his life as a family man, a technological

innovator, an agricultural developer, and so on.

Thailand means "land of the free" but as the king grows older, concern grows among the Thai people about the kind of ruler his successor will be. The princess has already won hearts with her concern for welfare through an active role in clearing slum zones of Bangkok; she has been instrumental in the construction of apartment blocks to house shack dwellers in the central city area.

There are many who regret that the throne will not pass to her.

country in focus

Photocopy this panel, and give a copy to all the young people in your church - or if you like to live dangerously, give a copy to everyone in the church!

What is the minimum age that someone is ready to:

Teach in Sunday School

Be a youth leader

Be a deacon

Be an elder/minister

Get involved in overseas mission

Lead a weekend retreat

Disciple a young Christian

What is the maximum age that someone should:

Teach in Sunday School

Be a youth leader

Be a deacon

Be an elder/minister

Get involved in overseas mission

Lead a weekend retreat

Disciple a young Christian

SURVEY: What do they say?

Think about the activities that need willing personnel in your church and other jobs that need doing. Are they always done by the same people? Do young people ever get a chance to do them?

Are older, married people more acceptable to take up a key role than younger, single ones?

Do you as a church encourage people of all ages to progress in their Christian lives, which may mean a change of role within the church fellowship? What is your attitude to people stepping down in order that somebody newer and younger can take over?

In the context of a Sunday Service

What is the minimum age that someone is ready to:

Give the notices

Do a Bible reading

Take the offering

Do the children's talk

Preach the sermon

Play a piano solo

Lead worship

Distribute bread and wine at communion

What is the maximum age that someone should:

Give the notices

Do a Bible reading

Take the offering

Do the children's talk

Preach the sermon

Play a piano solo

Lead worship

Distribute bread and wine at communion

NOW ASK:

What is the average age people do these things in your church?

Would you like to see them done by younger people? Analyse your findings.

QUESTIONS

Are there some jobs that people think can be given to young or youngish people, whereas others are definitely left to the middle-aged and wrinklies?

If that is so, is there a reason for that?

Is it a good reason? Or one that assumes young people can't be given any responsibility until they have held down a job for five years?

If a member of your youth group felt called to leadership within your church, what would your reaction be? Would you encourage them?

eview

Why bother with mission?

by Stephen Gaukroger, IVP, £3.99 with Bible Study Guide, 50p

On opening the cover of this book one can see immediately that it is different to most books about mission. The foreward contains an attempt to stop you reading the book and the 'afterword' is an encouragement to apathy and inaction, both signed 'Lucy Fer'.

Every chapter is punctuated with quotes, cartoons and anecdotes along with scripture references and lists of practical ideas for putting into practice the suggestions made and the whole book is written in a clear and straightforward way.

Every chapter concludes with questions for discussion, reproduced with a summary in the accompanying workbook and a helpful resource list is provided.

The author addresses the need for individuals and churches to be mission-minded without ignoring some of the difficult issues involved and he challenges his readers to all play their part in world mission.

This is not the book for anyone seeking an in-depth study on missions but it is a very readable, practical and broad introduction to mission – and an enjoyable book to

read!

Sue Millar — minister, South Harrow Baptist Church, London



10 WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN BE A YOUNG **PEOPLE FRIENDLY CHURCH**

Talk to them in church, and when you see them outand-about. True, it might not give them much street cred to be seen talking to you, but once they get to know you, that won't be a barrier.

Write to them when they go away to college - and keep writing! It's really demoralising to receive one letter, and then nothing more.

Encourage them when you know they're going through a tough time - family problems, exams, boyfriend/girlfriend trouble etc. But don't be too quick to offer advice - wait for the right opportunity.

Support any and all young people's ventures that are put on through your church - even if you'd rather be doing something else!

Invite them for a meal. Get to know them. Find out what makes them tick, what their hopes and fears are, what they like and dislike.

Don't criticise their clothes, make-up, hair-dos, body piercing or taste in music. You were young once, and it is the nature of youth to strike out for independence.

Encourage them to each find out their gifting as Christians, and having done that, encourage them to work out that gifting. Give them opportunities to try it out.

Give them the freedom to fail. Just be there to pick up the pieces if necessary. And if you need to admonish, deal with the issue but sandwich it with praise and positive thinking.

Be willing to train them if their calling matches yours. Young people need role models so that they can develop in the faith.

Pray for them!

ACTIONeard

COMMUNITY FARMING

A visit to the rural service centre at Galaha near Kandy in Sri Lanka projects a powerful message. This is an organic farm in the central Sri Lankan hills founded by the Christian Workers' Fellowship and with three main aims:

CONSERVATION; RE-CYCLING; DIVERSITY

The farm is 55 acres with very little topsoil, owing to the earlier tea bushes. The big tea estates are all privatised in Sri Lanka and vary greatly in working conditions and opportunities, or lack of them, for the workers.

The farm at Galaha now has livestock, cows, goats, rabbits and poultry. It makes the maximum use of compost, crop rotation and terracing, with minimal use of imported feedstuffs, artificial fertilisers and insecticides. There are flourishing crops of fruits and vegetables, including winged beans and peppers, potatoes and cabbages.

The farm is a training centre to which people come from a wide area. Eight trainees stay for six months and others come for short courses. Each of the cowsheds has a biogas generator and the gas is used for all the cooking. Extension work among local farmers goes on all the time, including the encouragement of cooperatives and small loan schemes.

The centre forms an inter-faith and multi-ethnic community. it focuses on the people and on developing balance between the people and the land, helped by appropriate technology.

Please send this month's card to the Revd Harry Hass at the Woodlands Community, working for community development and small scale farming like that at Galaha and supporting the tea workers in their efforts to improve their lives.

Address:

Woodlands Community Network, 30/6 Esplanade Road, Bandaralwela, Sri Lanka.

Find out about Benchmarks, which is exploring ways to challenge companies around the world to develop environmentally friendly and community based policies.

Contact:

Crispin White, ECCR, 11 Burnham Wood, Fareham, Hants, P016 7UD.





Land where they thirst for God

lbania – a European country and yet many of us would be hard pressed to locate it on a world map. This tiny nation, no larger than Wales, with a population of 3.5 million half the size of London's located opposite Italy and below the former Yugoslavia, has been closed to the world's attention for around 40 years due to the policy of isolation followed by the communists. This was home for one 28:19 Action Team who lived and worked there for six months.

Albania was bound by the oppressive communist dictator, Enver Hoxha (pronounced Hodger), who ruled with an iron fist from 1946 to 1985. Hoxha proudly declared that Albania was the "first atheistic state" that the

world had ever known but his successor, Ramiz Alia. announced that Hoxha's statement was a mistake.

The dictator's mission to abolish God meant that the word "God" was even edited from the dictionary! His fierce attack on all religions began in 1967 as a result of which 2,000 mosques, churches, monasteries and seminaries were shut down, closed, burned or converted into cinemas, gymnasiums or museums. Leaders and believers of religions were to be "wiped off the face of the earth", and so a systematic extermination policy was carried out.

Even amid all this God was at work. Far from throttling the church at source, the persecution deepened many people's faith. People began to turn up to church in even greater numbers than before!

It was hard for us to comprehend the environment of fear which Albanians have lived in for so long. Most children have grown up with no concept of God after being told repeatedly that he did not exist. It was such a privilege to share in the Christmas celebrations when some of the children in Sunday school were hearing the wonder of the story for the first time.

While we were in Albania, a significant birthday occurred; the First Baptist Church of Tirana celebrated the grand old age of one! At present, the church meets weekly in a cinema which it hires. Soon, space within the cinema will become a problem due to the rapid growth -

something to give praise to God for!

The cinema is not ideal, especially when the electricity fails, plunging the congregation into darkness. The church has about 100 members and numbers are on the increase; this summer some 30 people will be baptised at a local beach.

Sunday morning, 9.30am, a cacophony greets the ears as laughter, chatter and singing is heard at the Baptist Centre in the heart of Tirana. Both young and old have arrived for Bible lessons - Sunday school isn't just for the children; in a country that has not known religious freedom for 25 years, it is necessary for all to be taught. There is certainly no despondency, or even room for sadness at such gatherings as these.

The lives of Albanians



are harsh. Time after time we wondered how it was possible for these people to survive. No jobs, and little prospect of gaining one in the near future meant that some families lived from one day to the next to survive.

Communism has left Albania shattered; Hoxha managed to convince the people that they had the highest standard of living in Europe. Unemployment is estimated at between 60 and 70 per cent. Figures are unclear because Albania is a place of change, where statistics alter daily.

One man we met was so desperate to feed his family that he could see no other solution than to sell his blood. This is the reality of Albania. This story has a happy ending as God answered our prayers by providing the man with a

job and for a good wage. God surely worked a miracle then.

As we walked the streets, shouts of "Americano" would follow us as our nationality was easily mistaken. The best word to describe Albanians' reaction towards us was curiosity. Travelling on packed 1960-style buses and, if we were fortunate, on a seat that was more spring than bounce, meant we experienced a bombardment of questions.

The whole inquisition could be an exhausting experience but it was one of the best places we had an opportunity to practise our language skills and to witness as best we could.

Access for Westerners into the country was severely restricted during the communist era and, if a Westerner was in Albania, it was strictly forbidden for an Albanian to speak with them. Even now it is something of a novelty to speak with a Westerner and it's true to say, none of us misses the Mastermind sessions!

The generosity and warmth from Albanian people never ceased to amaze us and at the time, was humbling. During a Bible study in Laprake, a suburb of the capital of Tirana, we experienced one of the many frequent power cuts. With no torches, gas lamps, candles or matches, we were all ready to say our farewells and cancel the evening's session.

At that moment, there was a tap on the door and a woman who lived nearby appeared with candles and matches. Without even having asked for help,

someone had approached us freely wanting to help us.

This was not an isolated experience; throughout the six months we found similar reactions, albeit in slightly differing circumstances. It was a challenge for us to be servants when so many Albanians wanted to help, wanted to give, and with no apparent limitations.

So, is Albania a place without hope, a place with no future? From our six months experience, amid the struggles and aches, we witnessed God at work among his people, bringing relief, joy and a certainty that there is someone who cares for Albanians.

It was a privilege for us to be involved in this.

The BMS 28:19 Albania Team — Hugh Clements—Jewery, Andy Third, Melanie Fernandes, Helen Coles, Gavin Carpenter.

prayerfocus

A regular update from BMS colleagues around the world compiled by Sam Gibson

nepal



Martin and Katrina Butterworth

TRAINING

Martin and Katrina have begun mission training at St Andrew's Hall Missionary College in Birmingham with a view to going to Nepal in January 1997.

They have few details as yet on what they will be doing but it is likely they will live in Butwal, in western Nepal, the base for engineering work of companies started by the United Mission to Nepal.

There is always a need for doctors with Katrina's skills, so there should be plenty of work for her to do.

She recently gained a Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene with Distinction. The six people who gained distinctions in her course were interviewed about their work and

Katrina was awarded the gold medal in International Community Health.

Usually very nervous and unable to sleep the night before exams, Katrina felt strangely calm, slept soundly and went into her examination in the morning singing hymns.

Afterwards, she was told that the Monday evening congregation at the Baptist Assembly in Blackpool had been praying for her – this being the night before the big day.

Katrina is convinced that God is going to use her skills and her gold medal in a special way.

The Butterworths are studying a two term Award in Mission which includes mission theory, biblical studies, world faiths and mission in practice and communication.

Please pray:

- for studies at St Andrew's Hall Missionary College, Birmingham.
- of firm details about the work they will be involved in when they go to Nepal.
- that there be no problems with arrangements for leaving the UK, including visas.

albania



David and Yvonne Wheeler

Yvonne is head nurse at Tirana's ABC Health Centre, which is expanding to meet the demands of Albanians. A house next door has been rented where a doctor who arrived in April now lives.

The administrator has moved out of the clinic and into an office in the house leaving space for a laboratory. The doctor is to stay for six months with another following for a year. In a country with no adequate medical services, this clinic is outstanding.

David oversees the construction work of the **European Baptist Federation and is now responsible** for all the music at the Baptist Centre in Tirana which he and Yvonne attend. Five young people are learning the guitar.

Please pray

- thank God for the provision of a doctor for the health centre.
- thank God for the difference the young musicians are making to the church worship, pray they be encouraged to continue developing their



Phil and Rosemary Halliday

FRANCE

Since Massy Baptist Church was planted around 20 years ago, it has been a work of the French Home Mission Board. In March. however, it was constituted as a church in its own right.

The Home Mission Board encouraged the church to take this step believing that it is

sufficiently mature and of a size to become independent but it will retain its links -Phil is a Home Mission minister, invited to France and placed in Massy by the French Home Mission Board.

In order to be fully selfsupporting, the church needs to provide somewhere for the minister to live and needs to be able to pay the minister's stipend. Plans for the church to purchase the apartment which the Hallidays rent are underway, but it is not yet in a position to pay its minister's wages.

At the moment, Phil's allowance is paid by BMS but when the church is in a position to pay this money itself, Phil and Rosemary will move on, making way for a French minister.

April saw the launch of two new housegroups, one of which marks the continuing integration of Haitian Christians into the church. There are around 40 Haitians in the Baptist church at Massy. Many of them arrived in France as political refugees around 15 years ago and were housed in a hostel.

Since then, they have moved into more permanent accommodation and have become French citizens but integration into a local French church has been a slow and difficult process, in view of the natural desire to stick together, and some French Christians in the past have not been as welcoming as they could have been.

For many years, the

Haitian Christians have held a monthly Sunday afternoon prayer meeting in Creole, their own language. In February, they decided this meeting should be held in French and that it should be opened up to everyone.

Now, in order to be integrated further, the Haitian Christians have decided to replace this Sunday afternoon meeting with a housegroup, thus entering more fully into the church programme. This is a great breakthough.

Please pray:

- that the church will meet the commitment it has taken on in buying the manse.
- that the increasing integration of the Haitian Christians into the church will bear fruit in the church and community. Pray that there be forgiveness for any hurt caused in the past.
- that the church will soon be in a position to provide its own minister's stipend.

albania

Ryder and Heather Rogers

Ryder and Heather are responsible for leading a church at Bregu-i-Lumit. Martha and Rick, American missionaries in Tirana for language study, help Ryder and Heather and have begun a children's choir which is proving very popular. Rick, who was a music director in the USA, has properly scored some songs written by some girls in the church.

The church now has a team responsible for distributing aid, which is a great relief for Ryder and Heather. Compassion Ministry is a team of people within the church who pray about who should receive help and then take it in person. Whenever they visit people, they ask if they can pray for the person's needs.

Recently, two ladies went to a Sunday meeting at the church as a result of such a display of caring and they gave their lives to Christ there.

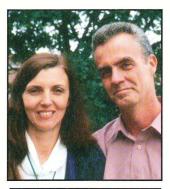
Please pray:

- that more people would come to God through Compassion Ministry.
 - wisdom for those in charge of distributing aid.
 - that plans to establish a Bible study in the next door village of Instituti would be done in the right way and on the right level.



Europe

brazil



Stuart and Georgie Christine

BRAZIL

Stuart is involved with the Urban Impact Project, a growing project with several programmes in the favelas of São Paulo.

They have recently completed a pilot Frontline Team scheme taking 12 young people from local churches to work weekends over three months involved in evangelistic and social projects in the favelas.

The scheme has been a great success and a new team, double the size, is expected to begin running in October when the Christines will also be joined by a BMS Action Team and an Oasis team from the UK.

The next new initiative is to set up a fitness centre and non-alcoholic bar under the Urban Impact Centre for young people from the favelas.

Owning to Stuart's increased involvement in the project, it has become impractical if not detrimental to the Jardim Olinda Church for him to continue as its founding pastor. A Brazilian pastor has now been called to work

with this newly formed church. Isaque, a final year student from one of the seminaries where Stuart is a lecturer, was inducted on June 15.

The project also needs a Brazilian Baptist to lead the pre-school work among under sevens as Georgie no longer has the time and energy to give the daily direction and administrative support that this growing programme needs.

It has been the key to unlocking mission interest and involvement in the local churches and the door of opportunity for hundreds of children and their families each year.

It now has 10 schools and its aim is to have 1,000 children in 25 centres by the end of 1998. As well as their work with the project, Stuart teaches evenings at two theological seminaries and Georgie is a librarian.

Please pray:

- for Isaque and his wife Christina as they begin this new work.
- continued wisdom for Stuart and Georgie as they re-focus on the work God has called them to and let go of that which is no longer theirs to lead.
- of God to provide the right person to lead the under-sevens.
- for continued growth and development of the Urban Impact Project, that it continues to make a difference in people's lives.



Colin and Marcia Pavitt

BRAZIL

Colin and Marcia are working with a new church planting/social project in Eldorado do Sul, 12 miles from Porto Alegre at the southern most tip of Brazil.

The land was purchased cheaply as it is low lying and floods when it rains. To overcome this, the whole building was raised 3ft above ground level. This entailed 80 lorry loads of infill, the construction of concrete bases and a system of columns and beams being laid deep in the ground to provide a secure foundation for the building.

After prayer, an experienced worker was found to take charge of the work when Colin and Saturnio, a Bolivian structural engineer, are not present. The church contracted a man called Carlos who is working well and he, his wife and daughter have all been regularly attending Tuesday and Sunday meetings at

In March, a

the church.

team of 46 North Americans arrived to help with building work and along with 25 Brazilians, the structure was completed in six days to the extent that a thanksgiving and dedication

service could be held.

The arrival of such a large group of Americans in a small Brazilian town to work on a church community

project caused a lot of interest and the project was featured in all the newspapers and on the local TV news.

Attendance at the church services has been encouraging with 42 children under the age of 16 and 25 adults. Of these, only six are church members and so a baptism class has been started.

Please pray:

- that the rest of the building be finished quickly and with no problems.
- for continued growth of the church.
- or the continued interest of local people and the media in this project.
- that the project be quickly and firmly established as an excellent community outreach.





John and Norma Clark

BRAZIL

John and Norma are now in the UK on Home Assignment until the beginning of September.

Their church, Hope Church in Fortaleza, is growing. The number of people in membership has doubled over the past two years and the Sunday school has seen even greater growth. The church has reached the limit of its available space and is trying to work out where to go from here.

One ministry of the church is to help people find jobs. Unemployment in Brazil is as high as in the UK but with no social security safety net. God is answering the prayers of the church, however, who have seen members find employment.

One such person is Raimundo who is now selling cleaning cloths at garages. The young people in the church bought the material and helped him to make the cloths.

Finding work can be life changing – a man called Cleberson has been transformed in both physical appearance and attitude. He now hopes to be married to Deborah, the church treasurer. He has been going out with her for seven years!

Please pray:

- praise God for growth at Hope Church and pray for space to accommodate its expansion.
- for God's blessing on the work among the longterm unemployed.
- that John and Norma quickly settle into Home Assignment and find time for relaxation.

JULY/AUGUST 1996

Arriving in UK

Valerie Hamilton from Dhaka lain and Karen Gordon from Kathmandu Joy Ransom from Kathmandu Neil and Ruth Abbott from Clermont Ferrand John and Sue Wilson from Morsang-sur-Orge Gwen Hunter from Kimpese Pat Woolhouse from Kimpese

Departing UK

Sheila Samuels to Delhi
Neil and Ruth Abbott to Clermont Ferrand
Phil and Rosemary Halliday to Massy
Ian and Pauline Thomas to Carcassonne
John and Sue Wilson to Morsang-sur-Orge
David and Ann MacFarlane to Altamura
John and Norma Clark to Fortaleza
Mike and Daveen Wilson to Mossoro, Rio Grande do
Norte

John and Valerie Furmage to Paraná Mark and Andrea Hotchkin to Conakr Helen Johnston to Kathmandu

Overseas Visits

David Martin to Hong Kong Sian Williams to Colombo, Calcutta and Delhi

Anonymous gifts

For April 1996

We are indebted to the generosity of those who give to the work of making Jesus known through BMS colleagues across the world and acknowledge: TOTAL £1,589.42

Legacies

For April 1996

We are grateful for the support of thise who remember the work of the gospel in their wills and we give thanks to God for the following bequests

	T.
Belton Miss Eva	17,770.31
Berry Mrs D G	43.04
Burton Miss Edith M	500.00
Clark Miss Evelyn W	1,000.00
Field Miss D	500.00
Gudridge Miss Enid L	619.95
Higgs Miss Elizabeth	350.00
Linnington Miss Evelyn	50.00
Pringle Miss Gladys C	74.02
Selby Mrs Freda P	2,459.97
Thomas Miss Doris M	2,405.93
Turquand Mr Walter H A	1,000.00
Webster Mrs Gladys M	200.00
Wildgoose Mrs Hilda E	500.00
Yates Mr James A	5,751.00
TOTAL	33,224.22

BMS projects

The totals raised to June 7, 1996:

	T.
Breaking Chains	34,018
Mighty Warrior	326
By His Stripes	481
Arise and Build!	1,258





Andy and Linda Eaves

Andy and Linda work with a children and family project run by the Baptist church at Limoeira do Norte.

The young people in the church have impressed members with their maturity and ability. The 14-20 year olds took on the preaching and leading of services while the pastor was away recently. They also make up the majority of those attending regular Saturday evening evangelistic services, which are usually held in front of someone's home. More good news is that the school run by the church, which was forced to close when its funding was abruptly cut, has now reopened. It was closed for two months earlier in the year when the pastor was on holiday.

On his return he sought new funding and was able to identify suitable funds from a number of available options which will support the project for the foreseeable future.

Please pray:

 thank God for the young people, may God continue to bless them and develop their ministries.

• thank God for the interest local residents are showing in the Saturday evening evangelistic services. Pray for the spread of God's word in the community.

 thank God for the reopening of the school which provides a decent daily meal for the children as well as a free education.



Sealed with a Kiss

ne of my worst childhood memories is of the ghastly moment when the elderly lady visitor bends down suddenly and amid a flurry of fur coat, large hat and pungent scent, approaches to bestow an unwelcome kiss. There's no escape as the glistening lips approach: nothing you can do, rooted to the spot, to avoid the inevitable. She's determined to kiss you. Arrgh!

It seems that modern children may be spared the worst of this where in our northern European political correctness adults no longer kiss strange children or even nieces and nephews half as much as they did a generation ago. With the passing of that terror for children it's now adults who need to be on their guard.

> embrace and kiss can happen at any minute. Everybody's doing it, politicians, royalty, artists (of course) and were you in Blackpool at the Baptist Assembly?! Is this all good preparation, I ask myself, for my present job travelling Europe and taking on the culture of kissing in all those Latin countries? Sometimes it's two kisses, sometimes three or even four and in other

At any social gathering, without warning or the chance of escape, the lunging

places it's just the one.

Remembering which country I'm in and how many kisses are required is very important! Get that wrong, or which side to aim first, and it can be a very bad start to a visit not to mention decidedly embarrassing.

Another problem I have is my moustache. While exchanging those skilled "air kisses" I have to avoid becoming entangled in dangly earrings, usually on women, and other bushy moustaches, usually on men. Misjudge the angle and the Velcro effect could be disastrous.

Then, of course, there are those for whom a mere cheek is not enough. In several of the former Soviet republics and elsewhere nothing short of lips-to-lips will do. Imagine the horror when the realisation first dawns that this is not to be a waft of near contact, impersonal and polite.

I sat amused in a large Baptist gathering in eastern Europe as delegates from western countries swayed first one way and then the other seeking a cheek before being lined up for the frontal attack. Surely this is taking the injunction to greet one another with a holy kiss a bit too far!

All that is in stark contrast to Bangladesh where customs were very different. No physical contact between the sexes in public and although I could not touch my wife it was perfectly all right to walk hand in hand with any colleague of the same sex.

I knew one married couple where the wife had short hair and wore jeans and a baggy T shirt – all very uncultural. She was often mistaken for a male and they made the most of the situation, holding hands in the

street and other public places when others could not follow suit.

Is all this kissing a sign of the creeping European influence, another import from the continent? What do the Euro sceptics say about it all? Is this something else we can blame on the Tunnel?

Well, it's back to work and it must be Albania.

Now how many kisses is that?

John Passmore is BMS Europe Representative and spent 10 years as a missionary in Bangladesh

John Passmore takes a sideways view



YOUNG PEOPLE AND MISSION

Older folk are always trying to get younger folk involved in mission – hey! no bad thing. The 28:19 Action Teams demonstrate the real benefit of mission experience both to the young people involved and to those among whom they work.

The above said, the encouragement given to young people to be mission motivated and involved, remains in many places not simply out of date in terms of presentation, but worse, patronising and shallow in terms of content. If there is to be appropriate challenge and encouragement to young people, we need to take the following seriously.

Firstly, issues of the mind. There are many intellectual questions concerning mission work that are being posed by trends in society.

For example, in a multi-faith world, where tolerance and pluralism are key ideas, should it be done? Oh I know that this is not the stuff of a glitzy presentation, funny and appealing – but if we do not engage in the argument for the minds of young people, then we will lose their practical involvement and support.

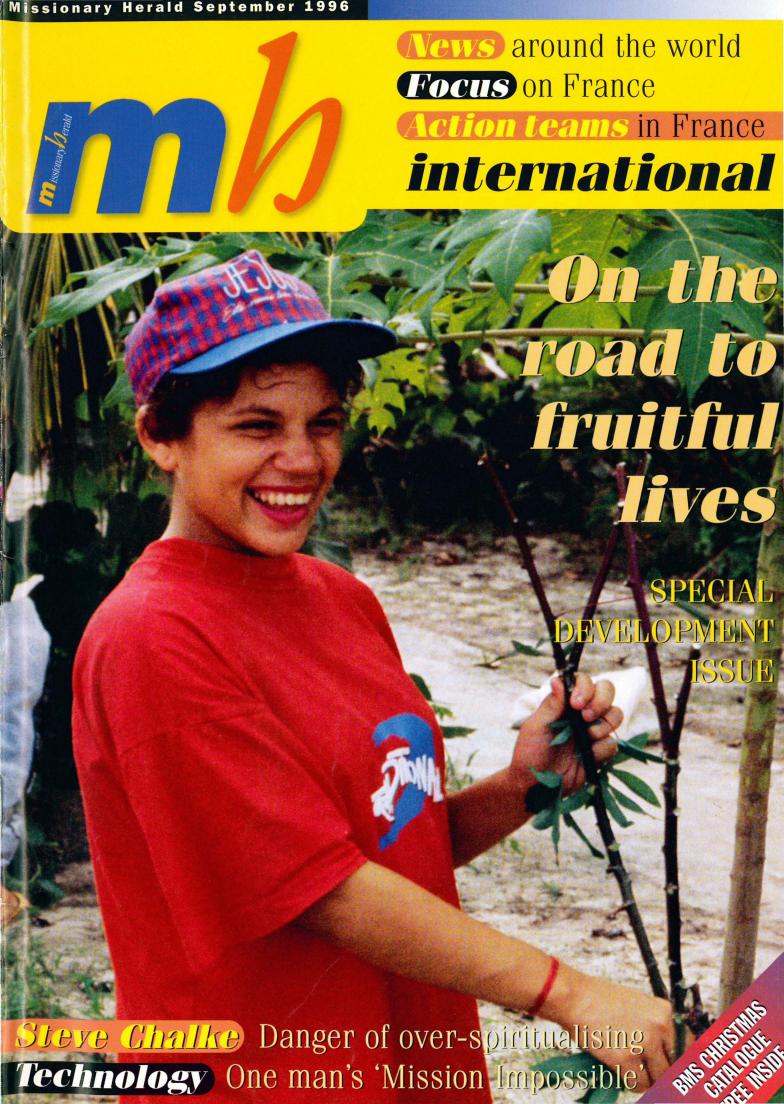
Secondly, issues of the heart. Young people are not moved by missionary organisations. They are moved and motivated by people and their needs. We need to show them people, and demonstrate how the group we

represent is touching the lives of those people and can help them to do so, if they sense that this is something that they are being "called" to. Any missionary group which does not facilitate the working of people in God's name for and with people, is a waste of space.

Thirdly, issues of the will. We can provide information and opportunities, called biblical challenge, but in the end the action of a person being convinced ("called") in heart and mind so that it affects their decisions for the future, is God's work. Here we need to pray for decisions of heart and mind that will affect the will – for service and sacrifice.

Stuart Blythe is one of the ministry team at Kirkintilloch Baptist Church, Scotland





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When is aid mission? And when is mission aid? No doubt this will have often challenged Christians considering what kind of support

to give to whom. It's a question that comes into focus at this time of year when aid agencies and mission organisations cast around for donations to finance a myriad development projects worldwide.

Talk to Christians about supporting such projects and many will want assurance that there is also a heart for sharing the gospel; organisations which satisfy the physical requirements without feeding the spiritual need are doing only half the job, they'll say.

It's not always that simple, missionaries will tell you. Which should come first, the physical or spiritual? BMS engineer David Wheeler has hit on a good formula in Albania – build much-needed roads to allow isolated villages better access to markets, hospitals, and so on, and at the same time make it easier for missionaries to take in the gospel.

And Steve Chalke has some food for thought . . .

Richard Wells

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Cover story

SOWING FOR A RICHER DIET

Fruit and veg they know nothing about in Albania 4

Steve Chalke

EITHER/OR

Is social action complementary to evangelism, or not? 9

News Section

FOREIGN AND HOME NEWS

Taking a look at the world from a global perspective .. 11

Centre Special

(SHAKEN AND STIRRED)

The boffin in God's army 20

Country Focus

mb LOOKS AT FRANCE

Mission file

(IDEAS AND OPINIONS)

Facts, figures and background resource material 28

Prayer focus

(WHO AND WHAT TO PRAY FOR

BMS 28:19 Action Team in France 32 Prayer points from BMS colleagues around the world 34

John Passmore

(A SIDEWAYS LOOK)

Waves

(AN INDEPENDENT VIEW)

Andy Stockbridge is this month's guest writer 39

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

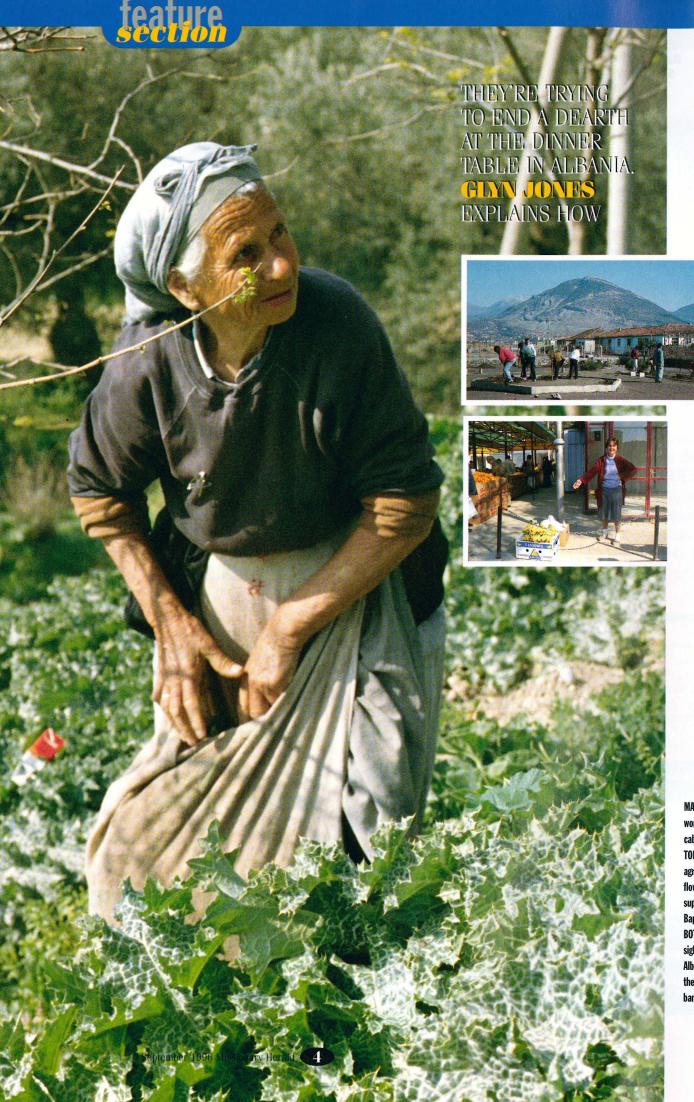
OUR RESPONSE TO WORLD POVERTY

Is it just a drop in the ocean?

(FOCUS ON BELGIUM

Where Baptists are thought of as being another sect

FRONT COVER: Marie Helena works on the Multifort project in Fortaleza, Brazil. Feature on Page 11. PICTURE: Tandem TV & Video.



MAIN: Albanian
woman collecting
cabbage leaves.
TOP INSET: Trainee
agriculturists sowing
flower seeds
supplied by
Baptists.
BOTTOM INSET: A
sight for sore
Albanian eyes: yes,
these really are
bananas!

Richerbiet

hich vegetables do you like most for Sunday dinner? Fresh peas, maybe, or sweetcorn; parsnips or asparagus, or broccoli?

You could enjoy these in most European countries, but in Albania Albanians eat only dried peas – not fresh – and as for the other vegetables on the list, forget it. They are virtually unknown in Albania.

Even cauliflower, beetroot, endive, courgette, globe artichoke, radish and strawberry – except wild gathered ones – are rare in Albanian markets, though common in other Mediterranean countries, and I have yet to see runner beans, chicory, kohl rabi, mangetout or sugar peas, canteloup, red or black currants, raspberries and gooseberries.

Albanians simply do not know about these wonderful vegetables and fruit.

Worse, they have no seed or nursery plant stock from which to produce them.

This extraordinary poverty of vegetables and soft fruit in Albania contrasts strongly with the huge diversity available in Italian markets just across the Adriatic sea, or even what is sold in Greece just to the south. Albania's favourable and diverse climate means its farmers, too, could produce all these vegetables and fruit – and others which we cannot grow in Britain because we lack the summer heat and frost free winters of Albania's coastal zone.

But they don't.

Instead, in winter, Albanians eat a monotonous diet of potatoes, dried peas and haricots, leeks and cabbage, with bread – always with bread – while in summer their main vegetables are lettuce, tomato, aubergine, lady's finger and sweet pepper.

The impoverished diet of Albanians is the result of two things: half a millennium of cultural isolation during Turkish occupation, followed by half a century of a command economy under the isolationist communist regime of dictator Enver Hoxha, when the state decided which crops should be produced.

Far from being an instant solution, the collapse of communism created an agricultural vacuum. For several years farmers could scarcely buy seed or plants since the state institutes and farms

responsible for producing them no longer functioned; and the free market had not developed so there was no alternative source.

Into this vacuum stepped a group of Britons – The Friends of Albania – who responded to farmers' needs by sending date-expired vegetable seed from the UK. Later, Feed the Children sent more seed and the BMS, whose agricultural missionary had become involved in the earlier Seed of Hope distribution, organised its distribution with the financial help of Operation Agri.

A small team of local workers was

employed at the Baptist Centre in the capital, Tirana, to sort more than a ton of mixed seed packets from the UK, separating flowers from the vegetables, peas

and beans, and herbs. Small bags containing a selection of vegetable and herb seed packets were made up for distribution to farming families . . . along with some attractive Christian literature.

Most British vegetable varieties out-yield the local varieties, perhaps

Albanians simply do not know about these wonderful vegetables and fruit.



Continues

Continued

ing for a richer die

steep donkey-track to the village so I

Glyn and Gill Jones serve with the BMS in Tirana, Albania, Gill in administration and Glyn as an agricultural consultant

ooking up in Nepal at the houses, and looking around at the craftsmen in their workshops, you can see a wealth of architectural heritage, contemporary improvisation and skill in the buildings of this Himalayan kingdom. From historically carved lintels, hand-woven thatch roofs and sensible timber-framed structures, to beaten oil-drum doors, cement-bag walling and roof collages of tins, tiles and car tyres: in Nepal "bricks and mortar" comprise a vast array of materials to act as shelter for people.

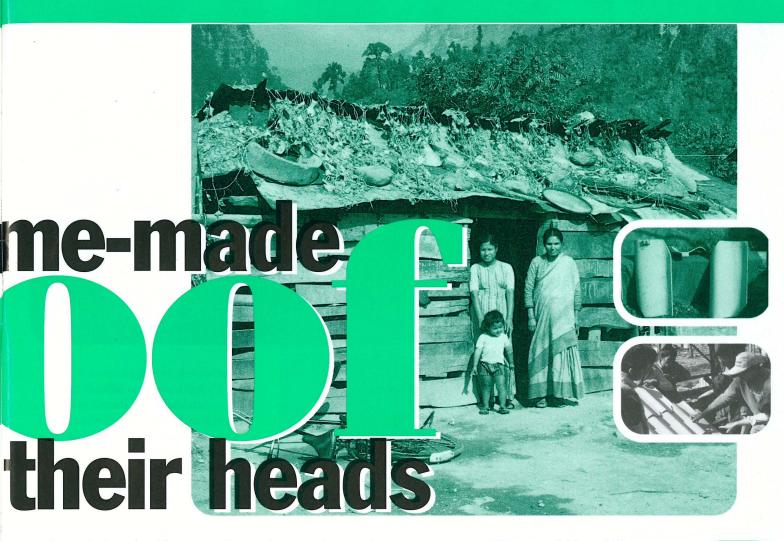
To the vast majority of Nepalis, seeking to build their own shelter to meet a most basic human need, the growing urban trend of questionable concrete and brick house construction is an unaffordable option.

An alternative was needed to the modern high volume manufactured building materials of largely foreign import - something that would complement or, at times, substitute the effective traditional building materials and practices that have been tried and tested for centuries.

over

DAVID PAYNE EXPLAINS HOW THE NEED FOR SHELTER GENERATED A COTTAGE INDUSTRY

Nepal is emerging into a technologically advanced world from more than a century of isolation. Its people are beginning to see what technology is on offer and want it. But most of it has to be imported - and it doesn't come cheap. This touches even the basics in life, like housing. How does the Nepali create shelter for his family, using modern materials and using methods over which he has control? That's where the expertise of Christians serving with BMS made all the difference.



I was asked to join with a group of Nepali technicians to address this issue. And so a local development programme was born. Today, in more than 150 towns along the south of Nepal, small independent workshops are adding to the available housebuilding materials by producing concrete roof tiles. Since 1984 a considerable number of village entrepreneurs have received training from the United Mission to Nepal's (UMN) appropriate technology work in Butwal. They have bought their own tile-making equipment and, in workplaces employing three to four people, they are meeting local demand for a durable roofing material in situations where thatch, clay tiles or tin are not viable.

At the outset, considerable time was given to understand the situation and resources available. Prem Singh, a rural development worker, visited and surveyed a number of widespread rural locations to ascertain the need and potential for building materials. Kamal Man and I studied comparable situations in other countries to identify

and use existing experience.

Sponsors of the programme, pushing for a "quick fix" solution, were placated!

We first needed to learn.

A need for durable roofing, the availability of Nepali cement and aggregate, and an approach used in Kenya came together to suggest that local workshops making cement-based roofing tiles might meet the need. Technical and economic feasibility was examined, locally manufactured equipment was tested, and the technology applied in pilot trials.

By this stage we hardly needed to promote or market the technology word of mouth and discriminating passers-by had fuelled a growing demand for it. Although the programme had established the tile's feasibility, we were cautious about the mixed benefits of releasing the technology into the market place, so we transformed from a research and development programme into a training service to allow people access to the process.

We had to let go of control.

The story of this roof tile technology development has hinged on people's commitment - Nepali and expatriate, of whom the late Tom Moncrieff should be particularly remembered. Its growth may be due to the fact that it generates income and provides shelter but its significance is probably more to do with the time and participation allowed for people and their opportunity to have a voice.

For a struggling Nepali, recognising his need and then gaining a creative understanding and ownership of the solution, brings a tremendous sense of dignity and fulfilment. But any participation in such work involves facing up to the issues and pain along with the gain.

For the missionary serving in development assistance, it's a case of allowing the best of God-given sensitive hearts and thinking minds to be available locally, seeking and sharing Christ's kingdom in the nuts and bolts of life on earth.

David Payne returns to Nepal as Adviser in Engineering & Industrial Development with the UMN in Kathmandu.

improvisation in Nepali housing TOP INSET: Cement Based Roof BOTTOM INSET: Participating in Development

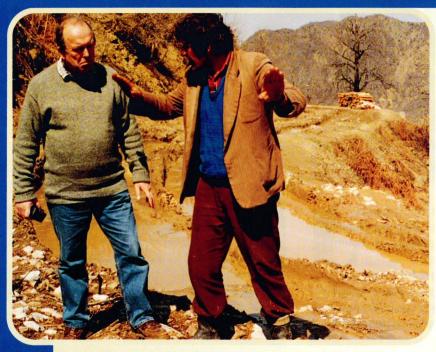
All pictures: David Payne



for our God



ALBANIAN MOUNTAIN TRACKS ARE OFTEN IMPASSABLE. **DAVID WHEELER** REVEALS HOW ROADS CAN BENEFIT THE RURAL ECONOMY... AND PROVIDE A WAY INTO THE VILLAGES FOR THE GOSPEL



David Wheeler discusses the Shkrete project with an Albanian colleague.

he still largely unreached people of Albania live in the central swathe of mountain villages which runs from north to south of the country. The European Baptist Fellowship has a holistic development project in nine mountain villages north of Tirana. If it is to go well, missionaries need to travel between the villages, so the first phase must be road improvement.

The most distant and difficult to get to is the village of Shkrete, via a track 12km (7.5 miles)into the mountains. The track, formed by local logging companies for hauling timber out of the mountains, is treacherous for five months of the year and on a good day takes an hour and a half to cover.

Last September I started to plan the construction of the road to act as a lifeline to village people, enabling them to take their produce to market, bring out their sick to a doctor or to hospital, have contact with the outside world and... allow the good news of Jesus to be taken in.

Work started in November with a gang of 11 village men, a digger and two lorries. But we still had to deal with the challenge of those in a position of authority. Each village has a head man in a hierarchy established in the old communist days. Any action, especially from outside, is seen as an effort to undermine this power structure and anything, like a road, which will mean more freedom for the people, is seen

immediately as dangerous.

Things became so difficult that the team retreated from Shkrete and started at the other end of the road while still holding to the original strategy of using village folk to do the work. After consultation with the district MP and with an older, respected workman it was decided to employ one man from each family living along the route of the road. This way each family would get some income and have a sense of ownership.

One family could not provide a man to work because, two months before, the father had gone blind. But the family had a 14-year-old boy and they agreed that he should be employed for a man's wages. He is now learning how to build stone retaining walls and lay road surfaces - and the income is lifesaving for the family.

The day work started it was snowing and there was ice on the ground. But these mountain folk are hardy and while one kept the fire going the others started digging.

Keeping water away from construction was essential. If the water in the mountain streams can cross the line of the road without entering its construction, the road will stay in position, so 40 culverts were placed at strategic points along with stone retaining walls to hold the road up. Then the good stone surface was laid.

The further into the mountains we went and the higher we got the more difficult conditions became. When it rained, it rained hard and the forest

track turned into a fast flowing river. When it was cold the ground froze and the men needed to protect their eyes from flying fragments of rock and ice. A gift of goggles has been much appreciated and each workman has been issued with a pair of Wellington

Work stopped at the end of December because of slippery muddy conditions, with about 3km of the road complete.

In the spring an inspection showed the work so far had stood up to the winter very well and, from a fresh start in April, work has been going apace and is expected to be finished in October.

Not all has gone according to plan. As the road builders approached the summit of the track they realised it wasn't just the gradient that would be too steep; so would the cost. So they left the path and went around the mountain, dynamiting a new route through virgin rock.

The benefit was not only a cost saving. The deviation cut 3km off the route and kept the road below the snowline so that it would be open all year.

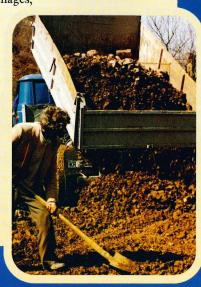
Construction could not have carried on without Tools With A Mission, which provided a vibrating roller, a concrete mixer, a low head, high volume pump together with shovels, pick axes, club hammers and chisels. The team have bought a metal kiosktype shed which has served as a store for cement and fuel.

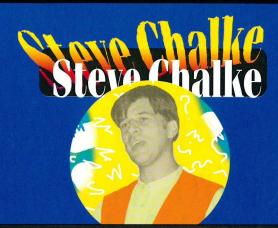
With the end of the difficult Shkrete road in sight, the challenge is now the construction of roads to the other eight villages,

for which an

estimated \$42,000 is needed.

BMS colleagues **David and Yvonne** Wheeler serve with the EBF in Albania, David as a civil engineer and Yvonne as head nurse in the clinic in Tirana.





Three years ago, when Oasis opened the Elizabeth Baxter health centre, a reporter from a well-known radio asked me what we hoped to achieve. I replied that our aim was to provide quality, primary health care for central London's homeless population. He seemed unconvinced. "After all," he told me, "you're an evangelical Christian. You people never do anything that's not really aimed at notching up converts.'

One of the biggest problems that has dogged the church this century – and one which is, sadly, entirely of our own making - is the dominant view that social action either detracts from or adds to (depending on your perspective) the real task of preaching the gospel.

For some, the urgency of giving everyone on earth the chance to respond to Jesus before his return has effectively put paid to all other activity: "What really counts is getting people saved. Leave the rest to the social workers." Others see it differently, arguing that social action is a complement to the task of evangelism: "The gospel is like a pair of scissors, with twin blades; evangelism and social action. Though the evangelism blade is sharp enough to cut on its own, the social action blade increases its effectiveness.'

But popular as these two views are, they both fall a long way short of Jesus' own approach. For him, social action was just as much an evangelistic task as anything else. It was part of the gospel, not an addition to or subtraction from it.

When Jesus began his ministry, he set out his game plan publicly in a kind of manifesto, or job description, taken from the book of Isaiah:

THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS ON ME, BECAUSE HE HAS APPOINTED ME TO PREACH GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM FREEDOM FOR THE PRISONERS AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT FOR THE BLIND, TO RELEASE THE OPPRESSED, TO PROCLAIM THE YEAR OF THE LORD'S FAVOUR. Luke 4:18-19

Tragically, Christians have made various mistakes with this passage over the years. Some have over-spiritualised its message. When he says poor, they tell us, Jesus is primarily, even exclusively, referring to those who are spiritually poor. Others, by contrast, have despiritualised it. When he says, poor, they argue, he's really talking about those who are financially, politically and socially marginalised.

But the truth is that this false division between body and spirit just wouldn't have occurred to Jesus. It didn't exist in the holistic, Hebrew thinking that he grew up with. In fact, rather than coming from the Old Testament, or Jesus himself, our compartmentalising tendency belongs to pagan Greek philosophy! By poor, Jesus would have meant those impoverished by any kind of hardship in any area of life: spiritual, social, political, emotional, physical, psychological, educational, financial, etc.

When we separate bodily and spiritual concerns, we devalue Jesus' message. Either we deny or downgrade the validity of offering people a personal relationship with Jesus, or we attach such importance to it that everything else gets shunted into a very poor second place, with development work being seen as nothing more than a kind of necessary foreplay to the real task of evangelism - a device by which we earn the right to "preach Christ crucified"

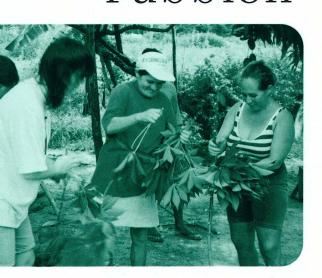
Instead, our task must be to respond to the whole gamut of people's needs as they arise: for spiritual fulfilment and, just as readily, for clean water, safe and sanitary housing, good medical services, creative jobs and an empowering education.

Why? Because our word evangelism, which literally means to preach good news, is the word Jesus used when he quoted from the scroll of Isaiah. In doing so, he made it clear that he saw his mission of evangelising the poor, not in terms of targeting them for conversion, but of responding to all the needs of whole people. Healing, forgiveness, inspiration, direction, friendship, challenge, self-confidence, selfesteem, acceptance and new life were all on offer.

All this must be part of the real good news for us too. If our evangelism offers people anything less, then we preach something less than Jesus' gospel.

STEVE CHALKE IS GENERAL DIRECTOR OF THE OASIS TRUST

Food from a load of rubbish



OLD EGGSHELLS, LEAVES AND SEEDS ARE AT THE HEART OF GOOD COMPOST HEAPS BUT IN FORTALEZA, BRAZIL, THEY FORM THE KEY TO A BETTER DIET – AND PROVIDE JOBS.

MARK AND SUZANA GREENWOOD REPORT

wo great needs of the population on the periphery of Brazil's cities are community-based employment and a richer diet at low

Many families in communities like Genibau, on the edge of Fortaleza, live disrupted lives owing to the long distances travelled to reach their places of work, and many children are left to fend for themselves while parents

struggle to earn the daily crust.

The traditional diet of these families does not always provide their daily nutritional requirements. What is more, the internationalisation of eating habits has combined to devalue further the nutritional value of their diet.

They are laying aside cheap, local products for the cultivation of expensive foreign-style food products; the Co-operativa Multifort aims to provide some sort of answer to these problems.

Instead of discarding everyday food by-products, the co-operative makes use of leaves (manioc), seeds (pumpkin, melon, sesame, millet) and eggshells, together with wheat bran to produce flour rich in essential nutrients, especially vitamins and minerals.

The recipe is recommended by a national campaign known as Alternatives Versus Hunger.

Through their work in the production area, provided by BMS funding, and sales of the mix, the members of the co-operative are able to boost the monthly family income, work close to home - evening bring the children along - and move towards improving the diet of their friends and neighbours.

The enthusiasm with which the ladies brought along utensils and furniture from home at the start of the project, and the efficiency in production, have been great to witness.

People in the community and the

city are beginning to see the value of the project; a Christian advertising agency put together a marketing package

and a regular clientele is beginning to take shape.

Of the five ladies working in the sooperative at the beginning of the year, three are now on maternity leave,. which left a gap in the team.

This gap has been filled by two new members but those away looking after their babies still benefit from the mix.

Multifort is not just a useful vitamin supplement for all the family, it helps to encourage breast feeding, too, in a society where powdered milk is the norm. Mothers using the flour in their own food while breast feeding have noticed a clear increase in their milk production.

Looking to the future, the cooperative needs to find its own sales and administrative personnel. Up to now, the bulk of this work has fallen on our shoulders.

While the current members are excelled at production, no-one has natural sales of organisational skills. If such people can be found and integrated into the co-operative, its future as a community-based income generator will be secure and more people will benefit from a richer diet.

Mark and Suzana Greenwood serve with the BMS in Fortaleza, Brazil, doing community and church work







MISSION NEWS FROM HOME AND ABROAD

Strong support for president's tour

As the next major engagement approaches on BMS president Carolyn Green's nationwide tour. organisers are hoping for a similar response to the enthusiasm which greeted the first celebration.

The first of 21 regional mission celebrations throughout Britain drew 400 people to Avenue Baptist Church, Southend, at the end of June. The next celebration is at Brighton Road Baptist Church, Horsham, West Sussex on Saturday evening September 14, at which the keynote speaker is Sussex

Association Missioner David

Carolyn, who aims to put world mission high on every Baptist church agenda, is devoting her year in office to meeting church leaders at working breakfasts around the country and to encouraging churches in mission through regional celebration meetings with guest keynote speakers.

BMS Constituency Support Director Andy Stockbridge clearly saw the response to the first celebration as an endorsement of the current direction of the society's work.

"It's a great encouragement to all involved and particularly to Carolyn to get this level of support for both the celebration and the reception. There was a very real and positive sense of enthusiasm and encouragement for the work of cross-cultural mission and the role of BMS today."

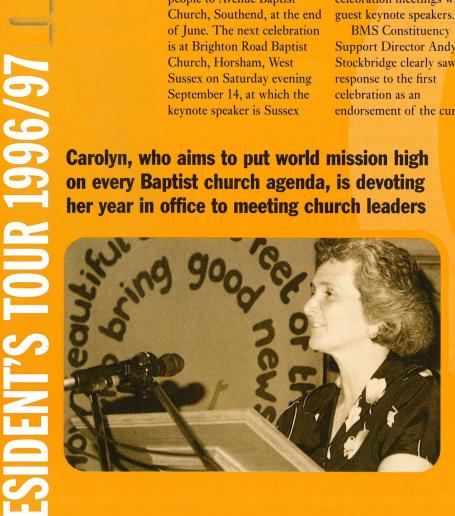
The celebration at Southend was hosted by a local team headed by worship leader Colin Waller and Cross Talk, which provided drama.

A Live-Link telephone interview with BMS worker Mary Parsons in Fortaleza, Brazil, was complemented by keynote speaker Martin Hewitt, who is about to move on from the BMS to take up a lecturing post at St John's, Nottingham.

Using the Hebrew prophet Jonah's experiences in hostile, distant Nineveh, Martin challenged people's parochial vision to face up to God's call to care for the people of the world by taking his word to them.

Later, BMS Europe Representative John Passmore spoke of the growing opportunities for mission in former communist countries and in muslim areas.

Carolyn, who aims to put world mission high on every Baptist church agenda, is devoting her year in office to meeting church leaders



Continues on page 12

President's tour venues

Saturday 29 June 1996

Avenue, Southend for Eastern Area. Keynote speakers: John Passmore and Martin Hemitt

Saturday 14 September 1996

Southeast Area: Horsham: Keynote speaker: David Hall

Friday 11 October 1996

Metropolitan Area: Haven Green

Keynote speaker to be announced

Saturday 19 October 1996: Metropolitan Area, Trinity Baptist Church Bexleyheath: Keynote speakers: Sammy Verhaeghe: and David Martin

Thursday 7 November 1996

Westbury on Trym Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Saturday 16 November 1996

Cardiff. Albany Road, Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Tuesday 19 November 1996

Carmarthen: with Welsh input:

Friday 22 November 1996

Bangor, Penuel Keynote speaker: Peter Dewi Richards

Saturday 23 November 1996

Keynote speaker: Geraint Morse

Friday 29 November 1996 Lancs and Cheshire Association, Liverpool:

Keynote speaker: John James

Friday 10 January 1997 South Parade Leeds for Yorkshire

Association. Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Sunday 12 January 1997

Sunday evening for Northern Association at South Bank Baptist Church, Middlesborough: Keynote speaker: Alan Pain

Friday 17 January 1997

Cambridge, Histon Baptist Church: Keynote speaker: Michael Quicke

Saturday 18 January 1997

Buckinghamshire, Union High Wycombe:

Keynote speaker: Steve Gaukroger

Friday 7 February 1997 Nottingham: Watnall Road Hucknall Keynote speaker: David Coffey:

Saturday 8 February 1997

Leicester: Central Baptist Church Keynote speaker: John Lewis (Skipton)

Friday 7 March 1997

South Street Exeter for the Southwest. Keynote speaker: Ian Coffey

Thursday 13 March 1997

Newtown, Powys Keynote speaker: Andrew Green

Friday 14 March 1997

Sutton Coldfield Baptist Chur

Friday 11 April 1997

Celebration in So Keynote speake

Saturday 12 April 1997

Sunday 13 April 1997

Strong support for president's tour

Continued from page 11

In tandem with the celebration, a presidential buffet reception allowed Carolyn to pay tribute to the efforts of local volunteer BMS workers.

Some 140 mission secretaries, birthday scheme co-ordinators, church leaders and Missionary Herald local distributors met Carolyn and senior BMS staff, along with Avenue Baptist Church minister Alan Griggs.

Carolyn stressed the evangelistic nature of the BMS which, she said, was constantly at the cutting edge of mission.

The current series of leaders' breakfasts is in south-east England. Next month Carolyn's tour moves to the London area with celebrations at Haven Green, Ealing and Trinity Baptist Church, Bexleyheath.

In November, she will be in the Bristol area, Cardiff, Carmarthen, Bangor, Wrexham and Liverpool. •





Southend Baptists relax together after hearing Carolyn Green speaking 'at the cutting edge' of mission.

Tributes to Mama Molingo

Tributes have been coming in to the life and work of retired missionary Audrey Weller, who died on June 6 at the age of 91. Audrey, who served in Zaire from 1946 until her retirement in 1970, was head of the girls' primary school and boys' primary school in Bolobo and founder of an Educational School of Apprenticeship (EAP) for training



teachers in Bolobo. She became teacher and then head of Bolobo Secondary School. Besides teaching, Audrey was also director of an orphanage at Bolobo and in charge of Christian education.

The Revd Koli Mandole Molimba, General Secretary of the Baptist Church of the River

Zaire (CBFZ) said: "In all of these posts of responsibility, she was recognised as a very hard-working woman and very well-liked by all, to the point of being christened locally as Mama Molingo (a woman's necklace made in ivory) and Mama Leki (Aunty).

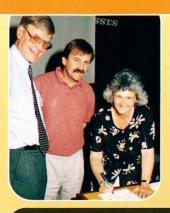
"Today, a number of her pupils occupy high positions in administration and in government. God has really blessed the work of Mama Molingo. The CBFZ and Zaire has harvested a lot of fruit from her tremendous work."

Audrey's funeral was held on 17 June in Chichester, Sussex.

Indian pastor on tour

The Vice President of the Baptist Union of North India, the Revd Rajinder Mashi, is to travel to Britain in the autumn as a BMS Fellowship Visitor.

Rajinder, who pastors the 200-strong Shahdara Baptist Church, is expected to tour Baptist churches in Britain during his month-long visit.



signs satellite deal

President Carolyn Green has signed an agreement taking BMS into corporate partnership with SAT-7, a new satellite television service for Christians in the Middle East.

The service will carry a range of public service, familyoriented and positive Christian programmes produced mostly within the region.

Since April it has been broadcasting up to three hours a week in Arabic but is still seeking "launch partners" willing to pledge \$10,000 (about £6,700) a year for three years.

Next year SAT-7 intends to increase transmissions to three hours a day in Arabic and other languages and, by 1999, wants to be on air 24 hours a day via a digital channel in multiple languages.

SAT-7 controllers say the channel will provide a unique form of witness, taking the gospel into millions of homes where the good news of Jesus Christ has never been heard before.

Programming will aim to be culturally sensitive, match the religious ethos of the region and provide an attractive alternative to local broadcasts and materialistic western channels.

BMS's involvement, approved by General Committee, will allow the society access to the TV station's partnership council so that it can be actively involved in its ministry.

Director of Operations David Martin told General Committee members that support for SAT-7 matched the priority areas in the BMS Strategy – mission to the unreached and increased use of the media.



01235 512077

You'll see that in the 1996 BMS Christmas catalogue, in the centre of this issue, a number of new products are available. Like the 1997 calendar - large, easy-to-read and in traditional style with superb pictures from around the world, taken by BMS staff. It's good value at only £4.50 (post free) and if you order 10 or more, you get a 10% discount.

Other items not in the catalogue include BMS bookmarks. There one for every country with which BMS has links.

And in response to questions from those who want to support BMS work financially, we have produced a reader-friendly Ways of Giving pack containing helpful information on the many ways of

Please give us a call if we can help with your BMS publicity requirements.

Christine Neilson — Telephone 01235 512077 — Christine Neilson

NEW YEAR HOUSE PARTY

If you're aged 18+ why not celebrate 'Hogmanay' in style at our New Year House Party. Phil Marsden and Derek

> Clark will be hosting this special three day event with wacky games, powerful prayer, a ceilidh and the midnight bells! The event takes place at the Atholi Centre, Pitlochry in Scotland from 31 December 1996 to 2 January

1997. The cost is £48 full board and all bookings should be made via Helen **Hamilton at the BU office in Scotland** (Tel: 0141 423 6169).

READY TO STEP SOWN Veteran missionary Betty Marsh, who retired from the BMS last year and promptly returned to her post at the Christian Hospital for Women and Children, in Orissa, India, under her own steam, has said she will probably step down within

Betty, who has been there since 1960, told BMS General Committee, meeting at her home church in Loughborough: "It's getting to the stage where I feel it's time to clear out."

She reported that the hospital's specialist surgeon had now completed post graduate studies in hospital administration. However, she said, there was still a need for leaders in nursing.

ON THE MOVE Newlyweds Simon and Karen Collins, who were married in April, are expected to leave for Angola later this year following language study in Portugal. Simon is a doctor and Karen a teacher.

Paul and Linda Ellis have moved to Yorkshire. The couple are taking a church planting course before moving to serve with BMS in Belgium.

John Furmage, the former minister at Fishergate Baptist Church, Preston, and his wife, Valerie, were flying to South West Parana, Brazil, at the end of August to take up pastoral work. They returned to Britain from Brazil in 1990 after 19 years service.

PIPS UNDER REVIEW Fresh life needs to be breathed into PIPs - the **BMS Partners in Projects scheme which** allows churches to adopt and finance individual mission projects. Launched in 1992, PIPs grew steadily until in 1994-95 130 churches took part, raising £106,500 for vital BMS projects abroad.

In the current year however only half that number has adopted projects to support.

The BMS PIPs Review Group, which met earlier this year, says there is a need for more and better information for churches and more feedback from churches.

A full PIPs report is expected later this year.

Honour for Helen



For former BMS missionary Helen Drysdale, 1996 is a year to remember. She was named the Marie Curie Cancer Care Nurse of the Year. Helen has spent the past two years providing free care to cancer patients in their homes.

Helen, a member of Viewfield Baptist Church, Dunfermline, was chosen from 1,200 nurses who work with the charity across the country.

Ten years ago Helen and her husband, Douglas, returned from six years service with the BMS in Zaire. There, he played a role in building new headquarters for the Baptist Community of the River Zaire (CBFZ) in Kinshasa. Now she works two nights a

week in the Royal Victoria Hospital, Edinburgh, and is always on standby call for Marie Curie Cancer Care.

When she is not nursing, Helen is missionary secretary for the Fife Baptist Association and convenor of the Overseas Christian Mission.

Of the honour she is modest and says the best way she can glorify God is by doing her job and giving her patients the best care. She says: "There are many people in this kind of job who aren't Christians. Having a Christian faith gives me deep spiritual resources that I can take into people's homes." •

PICTURE: Dunfermline Press

Partnership

The eight-year partnership between BMS and the El Salvador Baptist Association (ABES) has been dissolved by the General Committee. The decision follows a breakdown in relationship two years ago.

"We have written to ABES but we've had no response," BMS Operations Director David Martin told General Committee.

The BMS and ABES partnership dates from 1988 but in 1993, as the civil war there subsided, there was a change in Baptist association leadership.

"These were leaders with

different ideas and approaches to those who had signed the partnership agreement," said David. "They dissociated themselves from all expatriate missions."

Churches which were excluded by ABES in its shake-up formed the Baptist Federation of El Salvador and it is with this body that BMS colleagues David and Rachel Quinney-Mee have been working.

David Martin said: "It is with great sadness and regret that we break this relationship." •

BMS creates a winning combination

A drive to get more BMS supporters praying for people involved in world mission sees the society's popular prayer guide go free next year in a move which links it more closely to the **m**h (Missionary Herald).

The annual BMS Prayer Guide has a 10,000 distribution, of which 4,500 copies are paid for. The newlook guide will be published every four months and be distributed free with mh, which has an 18,000 circulation.

At the same time, the publication frequency of **m**h will be moved to twomonthly.

Managing editor Richard Wells said: "Our research showed people would rather have mh monthly or bimonthly, not nine times a year. Monthly publication would be too costly and overstretch our staff resources; six times a year will give us scope for further development and build on what readers tell us is an excellent publication." •

Flight from the rebels

SPECIAL REPORT: SAM GIBSON SPEAKS TO BMS COLLEAGUES ADRIAN AND SYLVIA HOPKINS AIRLIFTED FROM TROUBLE-TORN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Home Assignment came three months earlier than expected for BMS workers Adrian and Sylvia Hopkins when they were forced to flee the Central African Republic (CAR) at the beginning of June.

On 25 May, after a short-lived mutiny apparently over unpaid wages, civil war erupted in the capital, Bangui, between the Presidential Guard and the Guard of the previous President. Killing, looting and burning of businesses in the city centre followed and rebel soldiers began to move to other areas of the country.

Adrian and Sylvia, at home in Bossangoa, 300km north of Bangui, heard of these events the following day. While their town was mostly calm, Adrian began travelling on foot to safeguard his car after rebels commandeered a colleague's vehicle.

Fighting around Bangui intensified and the French Army Rapid Reaction Force moved in to protect the lives of more than 3,000 expatriates in the city. Evacuation began three days later.

On the same day, the government requested the intervention of the French military but this sparked anti-French and European feeling among ordinary people, who, up to that point, had not taken sides. Angry rebel forces advised expatriates to leave the country, regarding all foreigners as

The next day, aid workers in Bossangoa, including Adrian and Sylvia, received word from their organisations to stand by to be

Sylvia says: "One of the most difficult things was going around the house and thinking what were your priorities if you could only take so much. What were the things that you would take that you didn't want other people going through or destroying? We both had different priorities."

The French descended upon Bossangoa on Sunday afternoon. Soldiers fanned out around the plane threatening people standing close by. Within minutes, the plane was loaded with the 60 or so expatriates from the town and was taking off again to the military base at Bangui for the night.

At the base, the evacuees were fed military battle rations. Adrian says: "French rations are not quite what you imagine them to be. We had paté and chocolate biscuits and all sorts of wonderful things that we couldn't finish eating!"

From Bangui they reached the Gabon and flew home to Britain on Monday 3 June, nine days after fighting had broken out.

The country remains tense and the underlying issues which caused the mutiny have not been resolved but Adrian and Sylvia have since returned to the Central African Republic and will be back in Britain this month for their "real" home assignment.

Their work continues although the breakdown of much of the country's infrastructure will make life difficult. Government funds are exhausted and many civil servants have not been paid for several months. It seems likely there will be no school this year for the third time since 1990.

An injection of money from the IMF, planned for June, would have helped to pay salary arrears but it appears that the mutiny was timed to prevent this and so undermine the government.

Adrian and Sylvia are BMS personnel seconded to the Christoffel Blinden Mission, an international and inter-denominational fellowship dedicated to serving blind and otherwise disabled people in developing countries. Adrian works on the Central African Republic's river blindness control and prevention project and is a medical consultant for the central African region. Sylvia teaches the children of

expatriate workers too young to be sent away for education.

Slogan for the soccer crowds

Passers by at Daybrook Baptist Church, Nottingham, may have been bemused by an array of foreign language slogans on the

notice board outside. But they would have been

sus Elsker Dig! Isus Te Ljubi

understood by Portuguese, Turkish, Croatian and Danish visitors to the Euro 96 football tournament matches being played in the city. It was the church's way of reaching the crowds in their own languages but not before BMS Midlands co-

ordinator Theo Lambourne and BMS head office staff Mandy Ponting and Breda Smith had researched the translations. They certainly set the church office telephone buzzing.

Feast of world mission

Dates for your diary If you are organising a world mission event open to visitors, and would like it publicised in this diary, please let us have details at least three months in advance. Drop us a line at: Diary Dates, World Mission Link, BMS, PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA.

Presidential tour In September and October Carolyn Green will continue her national tour in the South Eastern and London Area. At the Cutting Edge – Celebration of Mission Saturday 14 September at Brighton Road Baptist Church, Horsham, West Sussex, Friday 11 October at Haven Green Baptist Church, Ealing, west London. Saturday 19 October at Trinity Baptist Church, Bexleyheath, south-east London. Details: Derek Mucklow 0181 393 6017

Other dates

10 September Tuesday Worcester Women's Rally at Sansome Walk Details: Lavinia Hand 01527 520136

Lancashire and Cheshire Autumn Family Day, Wrexham 14 September Saturday

Details: Cath Mawson 01274 487341

WMA Bilingual Conference at Swansea University Conference 10-13 September Centre. Theme - God's Secret Plan Details: Delyth Wyn Davies 01766 512957

Shropshire Women's Auxiliary Rally at Ludlow 21 September Saturday

Details: Ivy Jones 01952 506933

Nottingham BMS Support Group Children's Weekend nutungnam birts support Group Cinuten's Weenend "WOW be a Globetrotter", at Mansfield Road, Nottingham Details: Joan Manicom 0115 962 3235 27-29 September

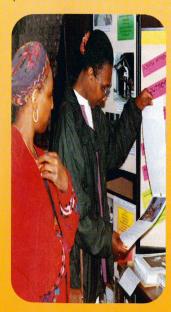
Hull District Mission Weekend, focus on Zimbabwe 12-13 October

Details: Cath Mawson 01274 487341

BAPTIST CHURCHES THROUGHOUT BRITAIN HAVE BEEN CELEBRATING THE WORK OF WORLD MISSION, AND mb DROPPED IN ON A FEW OF THEM

> Whether it was an anniversary, assembly or family weekend, the work of the BMS in making Jesus known worldwide was high on the agendas of many Baptist churches this summer.

Mission events, involving BMS General Director Reg Harvey, BUGB President John James, BMS head office staff and missionaries from around the world, kept people informed with up-to-date presentations.



World Mission for Churches

Inspiration, motivation, ideas, news on world mission for churches...

1ission Link



Scenes from mission events around the churches

Not only that, they served to strengthen links with church work overseas and to challenge church members in the UK about the importance of sharing the gospel with other nations.

At Gateshead, in the north of

England, the focus of a Northern Association family day was on the Fellowship of British Baptists - the body comprising representatives of the BMS and

the three Baptist unions in Great Britain.

John James and Reg Harvey were joined by Jackie Sheppard (BUGB), Cath Mawson (BMS Coordinator for the North), Peter Price (BUGB), BMS missionary Chris Spencer and a team from Alnwick who led seminars, while Phil Marsden, BMS Youth and Children's Co-ordinator, and the Albania 28:19 BMS Action Team ran an all-day youth programme.

Margaret Barnett, Northern BMS Auxiliary secretary said: "They brought a challenge to all of us about the importance of mission at home and abroad."

Bexhill-on-Sea Baptist Church, East Sussex, used its centenary year to hold an exhibition with neighbouring congregations from Sidley and Pevensey Bay, demonstrating their links with the church overseas.

> Using videos, displays, young people's activities and drama the 200 visitors saw how the power of the gospel is breaking the bonds of poverty, disease and

spiritual darkness.

The work of BMS link missionaries Colin and Marcia Pavitt, in Brazil, and Prema Tennekoon, in Albania, was presented along with displays of



activity in the Middle East and Kampuchea (Cambodia), and links between the Sidley congregation and a Baptist family in France were celebrated when visitors sampled fare in a "French restaurant".

In Shropshire, Baptists converged on Bridgnorth for a programme led by BMS church planter Kevin Donaghy, back from Toledo, Brazil, BMS Midlands Co-ordinator Theo Lambourne and **BMS World Mission Link** Organiser Audrey Rowland.

Hosted by Bridgnorth pastor Ray Gill, the programme gave visitors the choice of a presentation on Brazil from Kevin, a video news report from than the old hit and miss' missionary Nepal made by mh Managing World Mission Link programme. The programme is there to help churches and **Editor Richard** nogramme is there to help churches and adviduals, small groups and large groups, to et involved in world mission. If you want to Wells and a now more do contact us. recorded satellite link

with a girl in Zaire. Problem-solving sessions challenged visitors to motivate people for mission, to get them to pray and to give. A quiz was won by Marie Instone, of Madeley Baptist Church.

The West Midlands summer assembly, at Acocks Green,

Birmingham, heard an address on Body and Soul - the Wholeness of Mission, by the new president, Glen

Seminars involved BMS colleague Mike Wilson, who heads development work in Trapia, Brazil, and the association's Asian missioner, Jay Chauhan, who explored the character of the

our church in a Link-Up group? Are you Ving being kinked? Is it a good experience? is what some of the letters in my postbag said about Link-Up

Yes, it was good to meet our Link-Up missionaries but we also feel that someth

oful in allowing for an interchange of ideas.
It was really encouraging to receive

It was reany encouraging to receive positive feedback from the missionaries about

positive recovery from the infestionairies about our efforts. We also appreciated their concern

our enorts, we also appreciated their conc for us and how they could support us in the

Having an on-going relationship with a

missionary has been really helpful to the small

We've found the scheme so much better

churches in our group.

Pry Positive has been achieved by the

British Asian community, while reporting sessions were held on a partnership mission to Birmingham, Alabama, and **Shirley Baptist** Church members'

At Oxlow Lane Baptist Church, Dagenham, east London, Phil Marsden again took the stage with a WOW programme for 50 children at the Havering and Dagenham Baptist Missionary Fellowship family weekend

Meanwhile the 11 churches in the fellowship each set up a garden party stall.

It was one of three events this year highlighting Nepal to raise £1,000 towards a PIPs project to support BMS missionaries David and Catherine McLellan. So far £955 has been raised.

links with Romania.



EUROPE Western European countries are seeing an alarming growth in the number of dangerous cults on the approach to the new millennium, say evangelical observers. For several years, they say, cults in eastern European countries have thrived where religious traditions are weak. Researchers now say that as many as 15 cults dedicated to Satanic worship exist in Italy. Elsewhere in Europe, there has been a sharp rise, in the number of cults sprouting up around right-wing or extreme political leaders. The Vatican has instructed clergy to become more familiar with signs of alienation and delusion which often lead people to join cults as a cure for their problems. (EBPS)

MEXICO Church workers in the Mexican village of Bachajon endured weeks of terror following a riot in which six people were killed. It started when residents, protesting against abuse of power by the paramilitary group Chinchulines, were prevented from returning to their village following a meeting in May. Violence erupted and the Chinchulines leader was killed. Houses were torched, a Catholic church firebombed and rampagers stormed a Jesuit home. In the weeks that followed, Chinchulines ransacked the houses of people who had fled in fear. **Church workers say they have been** closely watched and several have been threatened. Reports say that the government is refusing to intervene.

AMERICA A team of five evangelists from the USA and South Africa took advantage of Olympic fever to share the gospel as they cycled to the site of the 1996 games. They completed a crosscountry style marathon from California to Atlanta, cycling an average of 85 miles a day and stopping to share their faith at churches and youth groups along the way. On arrival in Altanta, several members joined in the Youth With a Mission international Olympics outreach bringing together thousands of Christians from around the world for three weeks of prayer, evangelism and community service projects around the games. (YWAM News)

LIBERIA Twelve international aid agencies spent summer limiting their work in war-torn Liberia to life-saving interventions following massive looting of aid material by factions tearing the country apart. They estimate that agencies in Liberia lost more than 400 vehicles, equipment and resources worth US\$35 million as well as thousands of tonnes of material aid. Looting and abuse has been rife since 1991 but the situation rapidly deteriorated in April when faction leaders encouraged young people to rob international aid agencies as well as their own families and neighbours. (ENI)

Sea of declaration

Seven new Christians made a declaration of their faith in the sea off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia, in a baptismal service led by missionary Josia Tambunan. His work in Medan is part of the evangelistic thrust by the Kerapatan Gereja Baptis Indonesia (Convention of Indonesian Baptist Churches) which is being supported financially by BMS. Funds from Britain help to keep missionaries in Medan, Kabanjahe and Bandar Lampung, as well as five theological students in seminaries. The convention's vision is to evangelise all of Indonesia's 13,000 islands. which have a population of 180 million. The 2,000-member convention has started work to plant a church in every district of the nation's 27 provinces.



Children from the nuclear fallout blackspots around Chernobyl are fostering fond memories of healthy holidays with Baptists across Europe.

For the past few years, the European Baptist Federation has sponsored a children's health improvement programme called Children of Chernobyl. Groups of up to 30 from areas most affected by radiation are hosted for up to a month by Baptist churches and members.

Studies have shown that even a few weeks away from the Chernobyl area has a beneficial effect on the health of the children.

The first group of 1996 – children aged between nine and 17 – arrived bewildered in Hamburg, Germany, at the end of May to stay with Christian hosts, few of whom were able to speak any Russian or Belarussian.

Even fewer children spoke German or English but by the end of their month-long stay, firm relationships had been formed which will continue, at least by correspondence, for many years.

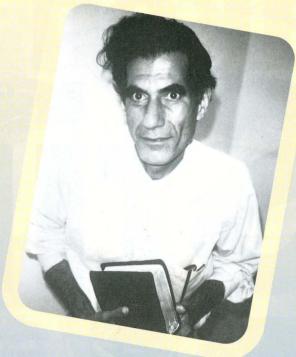
Children of Chernobyl is an on-going programme. It is said the radiation will continue for decades. perhaps for centuries. • (EBPS)

Christian faces death for Christ

Christians across Britain have been mobilised to action to help save the life of a Kuwaiti believer facing death for his faith.

Hussein Qambar Ali (44) now called Robert Hussein, became a Christian after obeying a commandment in the Koran which urges Muslims to read the Bible. After publicly announcing his conversion in December 1995, his wife filed for divorce and Islamic lawvers opened a case to have him officially declared apostate from Islam (one who has turned from his beliefs). Quoting Islamic religious law, the Shari'a family court ruled that apostates should be killed: "the Imam [supreme Muslim ruler] should kill him without chance to repent." After the hearing, a member of Parliament and an Islamic leader both demanded Robert's death.

Legally, the Shari'a court has no authority to issue the death penalty. A spokesman for the Kuwait embassy said "Changing one's religion in Kuwait is not a crime..Under Kuwaiti constitution, Mr Hussein - or any citizen of any religion - is entitled to the full protection of the law and the Kuwaiti authorities against any threat or danger." However, many



orthodox Muslims still consider apostasy a capital offence. Following the hearing, Robert said, "This gives the green light for any one to kill me in the street."

Robert has lost his building business, is unable to see his children and is in hiding for fear of his life. Reports, denied by the Kuwait embassy, say that his passport has been taken from him although he says he has no wish to flee the country. Robert has been granted leave to appeal against his conviction on the basis that apostasy is not a civil offence. His hearing will be heard on 15 September but even if his claim is upheld, he could

well remain the target of Islamic fundamentalists. Support for Robert has come from a number of areas thanks to Christian groups publicising his story and individual Christians acting on his behalf. An Internet page set up by an anonymous group to provide up to date information on the case, received more than 2,000 visitors in its first two weeks of operation. People across the world have been using the site to send messages of encouragement to Robert and to petition politicians as well as the Kuwaiti government on his behalf. The site offers Muslims around the world the

opportunity to comment on the case. The variety of replies show that there is no clear consensus of opinion over the issue of apostasy.

The sheer volume of letters from over 6,000 individual British Christians to the Kuwait Embassy caused press and politicians to take note. Issues of The Times carrying articles on Robert were banned from Kuwait and his case was raised in an Early Day Motion before Parliament followed by a letter to the Kuwait Embassy from a group of British MPs urging the intervention of the Kuwaiti government to guarantee religious freedom.

There's still time to support Robert's appeal by writing to the Kuwaiti Embassy asking the ambassador to intervene to protect the reputation of the Kuwaiti constitution and drawing his attention to Article 35/37 in which the constitution guarantees religious freedom. Write to: Mr Khaled Al-Duwaisan, The Ambassador, Embassy of the State of Kuwait, 45-46 Queens Gate, London, SW7 5HR.

For up to the minute information on Robert's cases, visit his web site at http:www.domini.orghussein /home.htm •

Water challenge!

The failure of the winter monsoon rains, which has left Sri Lanka's reservoirs more than two thirds empty, means Baptist churches there have had to exercise more

care... over baptismal services.

The delay in the summer monsoon has heightened the water crisis but resourceful Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church, in central

Colombo, remained calm.

Faced with the challenge of baptising six believers, leaders planned a two-part service. One part they held in the church. Then the whole congregation trooped through the city to the seashore and the service continued. •



GARY PRITCHARD STORY OF ONE MAN'S TACKLE A 'MISSION IM



TOP: Short-wave radio communications in Zaire

ABOVE: John Corbett testing, testing.

ohn Corbett is like a James Bond character. He's developed sophisticated "secret appliances" for the British security cause. He's had to hack his way not only through the airwaves but also through dense jungle.

You even have to negotiate a hazardous pathway to his remote Herefordshire cottage.

But that's where the analogy ends. For this modest English gentleman's mission in life is not to outwit Goldfinger but to do God's will.

Now 64, John spent more than 30 years of his working life at GCHQthe Cheltenham-based nerve centre for the British Government's security operations. There he became a highly trained expert in top secret aspects including the development of sophisticated communication networks.

That was all a long way from his humble beginnings as a radio ham, building wireless sets from scratch. He also had a stint in the RAF - where those amateur talents were honed into highly specialised skills.

But it was in his GCHQ days that he first realised his unique gifting could be used for God. "I felt this was an ideal opportunity to use my gifts for the Lord - my ministry, if you like" said John.

So in the 60s, he offered his services to the BMS to help develop a communications network to remote outposts. It was a crucial arm of the work.

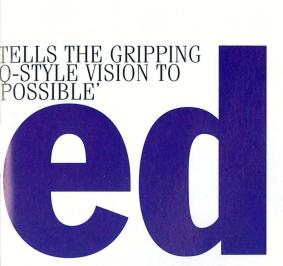
The string of Baptist churches established along Africa's River Zaire stretched over hundreds of miles and that was a big headache for anyone arranging supplies.

However, no amount of research or orientation could prepare John for the culture shock of his first African trip. "I had no idea of the scale of the operation," he recalls, "until I landed in Zaire with a suitcase full of equipment - to be told my connecting flight would arrive some time in the next few days."

Those regular trips would often end with the plane landing somewhere completely different to the intended destination.

But the tiring journeys, on which John was often accompanied by his wife, Margaret, carried their own rewards. Locals would respond with delight as their newly installed shortwave radios crackled into life.

It was an unbelievable experience for the villagers, who had only ever ventured a few miles from their home. Says John: "They have a word for



People Profiling John Corbett

geography-'mpoto'-which means 'the land beyond the village'. So the ability to speak to people hundreds of miles away was quite amazing for them."

John and Margaret became aware their wireless revolution could accidentally introduce unhelpful aspects of western life. "It was important to maintain the integrity of the local culture," says John. "Our aim was to bring vital communication links – not to invade their way of life."

That became a delicate process. with the new radio technology providing a far more accurate means of vital

communication. Historically, the Africans had used "talking drums" to relay messages from village to village, a carefully crafted low-tech sound system consisting of a hollowed-out tree trunk.

However, those messages were often misinterpreted - with sometimes comic results. "One day a message came via the drums that the doctor was dead," said John. "But it turned out to be a misread code that was actually saying the Land Rover was dead!"

Many organisations have sought John's help because of the skills and experience he has accumulated over the years. His technical manual - Where

There Is No Telephone - was ordered by the United Nations to cope with communication problems in the Bosnia-Croatia war. To date, that has been distributed to all five continents.

John's work has also often proved a lifesaver. As reports of the lethal Ebola virus and resulting deaths in Zaire last year began to pour in, John swiftly set up a satellite link to the World Health Organisation. They were then able to

prevent the spread of infection. Without John's crucial role, a higher death toll would have been likely.

Yet John takes it all in modest style. "I just used my

skills to assemble the system at home using my amateur licence," says John. "Then we shipped it out within days of the first reports coming through."

John's determination to submit his abilities to God's service in Africa has left an indelible mark on his life. The legacy of those trips comprises many stories and happy memories. But it is the villagers' generosity that really springs to mind.

"We were constantly bowled over by the overwhelming kindness of the people," says John. "We often received gifts of food that were desperately scarce and which they required for their

own needs. We learned far more about Christian love from them than they ever did from us."

John's work has taken him to places he had never heard or dreamed of, but if one aspect has stood out, it has been his ability to embrace new technologies and apply them to simple domestic needs. And even though now retired from GCHQ, he has no intention of

retiring from applying his special knowledge to God's work.

His new project is to link the jungles of Africa with the Internet. He plans to connect keyboards to the existing communications equipment, then via satellite links to the 'net.

"It sounds ambitious," he says, "but I don't see why the opportunities the Internet offers shouldn't be utilised by the villagers in Africa."

Pioneers to the last, John and Margaret prove that with God and total dedication, there's no such thing as a mission impossible.

Gary Pritchard is a freelance journalist based in South Wales. He is currently undertaking a media studies course.

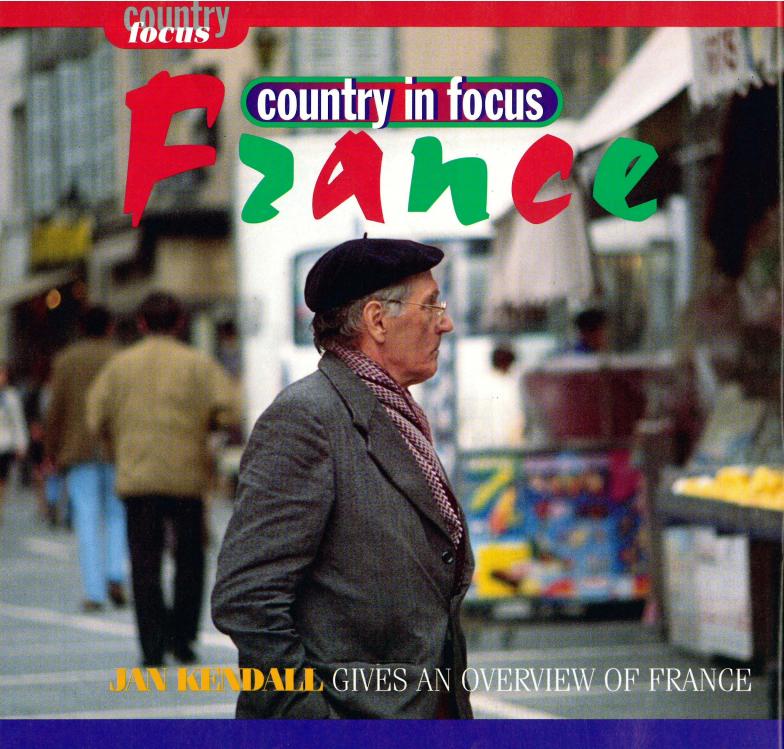
TOP: Putting a solar panel on the roof to charge a battery to run the radio at Yakambo-Koi

ABOVE: John and Margaret Corbett turned their Kinshasa flat into a communications workshop.

That proved to be a key

component in stabilising

the ebola situation.



rance is the third largest country in Europe after Russia and the Ukraine. It is one of the world's most cultured and sophisticated nations. For centuries French was the language of diplomacy and educated people throughout the world looked to musicians like Berlioz, Saint-Saëns and Bizet, and artists such as Degas, Cézanne, Monet, Renoir and Toulouse-Lautrec for inspiration. Today French is the first language of 115 million people worldwide.

Although France is a large country, it is not densely populated. It is

traditionally thought of as being rural, with large areas of farmland producing fruit and vegetables, meat, cheese and wine. The demographic balance is changing, however, with people more likely to work in a factory, an office or a shop than on the land. Although there are still approximately one million farms in France today, over half of the farmers are aged 50 or over and are without a younger family member to take over the running of them.

France is one of the core members of the EC, and its common agricultural policy has enriched many French farmers, but has also contributed to

mountains of butter and lakes of milk and wine.

At the height of the Reformation in the 16th century, 48% of the population was Protestant. Persecution of the Huguenots in the 17th and 18th centuries reduced this to the present 2%.

Today France is a secular state with freedom of religion; 68% of the population is nominally Catholic but only 13% regularly attend mass. It was the French Revolution of 1789 that stripped the Church of its power and influence, and this can be seen today in the values held by the people generally.

The Church outlaws contraception and abortion; the state legalised contraception in 1967 and abortion in 1974. One in four marriages end in divorce. There are 22 abortions for every 100 births.

More than 43 million of the 57 million population have no real link with a Christian church and many large cities often have only a handful of evangelical churches. Having said that, growth among evangelicals has been steady, doubling between 1965 and 1990. Over 1,000 evangelical churches have been planted in the past 20 years. Pentecostals have grown the fastest, tripling their membership over the same period - much of this growth has been among the Gipsy community.

BMS currently has five couples working in France.

Facts and figures France

Area: 551,500 sq km Capital: Paris (pop. 10,660,000) Population: 57,188,000 (1995) Annual population growth: 0.36% Children per woman: 1.8 (1991)

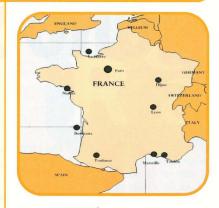
People groups
French 75%, International minorities 14% (North
African, Middle Eastern, Other European), Regional
minorities 10% (Breton, Alsatian, Flemish, Basque, Corsican, Catalan), Others 1% (Jews, West Indian Antillean, Gypsy).

Religion

Christian 71% (of which Catholic 68%, Protestant 2% and Orthodox 1%), Non-religious 19% , Muslim 8% , Jews 1% , Others 1% (Buddhist, Chinese religions, cults). Languages: French Literacy: 99%

One doctor for 350 people (1990) Under five mortality: Nine per 1000 (1991)
Calorie consumption: 143% of required intake (1988-90)

Communications 208 newspapers, 407 TV sets and 888 radio receivers per 1000 people





CROSS Channel links

ne of the highlights of mission work overseas is the appearance of a friendly face from back home. Missionaries look forward with eager anticipation to visits by friends and relatives, who drop in while on holiday.

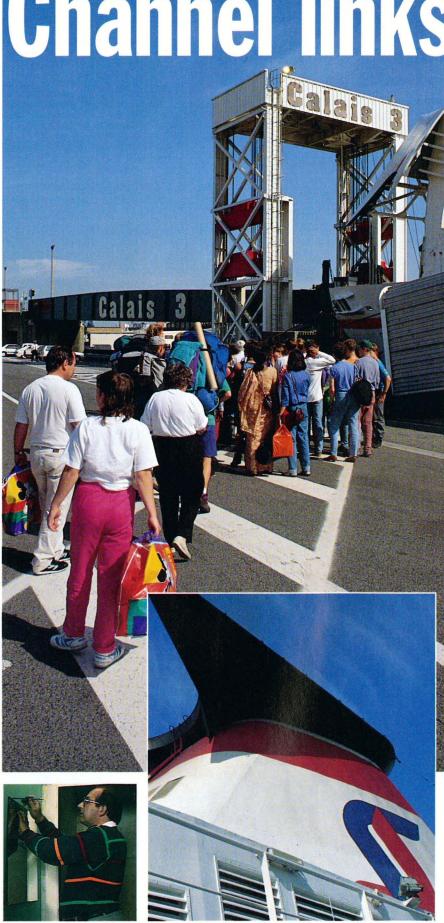
This may be difficult in remote parts of Nepal or far-flung places like Brazil or Thailand - these are not the most popular holiday destinations. But if it's as close as France, a hop across the English Channel is much more straightforward.

And that is just what a group from Zion Baptist Church at Creech St Michael, Taunton, Somerset, did last year. Their Link-up missionaries, John and Sue Wilson, welcomed them with open arms when they offered to cross the Channel, not for a holiday, but to give tham a hand in their work at the Baptist church in Morsang-sur-Orge.

Some of them toured the area delivering leaflets while others got involved with jobs around the church building - one of them was to convert a toilet into a shower room so that visiting teams could stay.

When a contingent from Hornchurch Baptist Church, Essex, paid a visit to their Link-up missionaries, Robert and Catherine Atkins, in Toulouse, it was an obstinate reinforced concrete pillar that became the centre of DIY attention. The pastor, Paul Merton, led a "demolition team" of members confident of flooring the slab in half a day but it wasn't long before they realised their pneumatic efforts would extend into day two . . . and possibly three.

And there are other stories. One couple have bought shares in a cross-Channel ferry company so that they enjoy half-price fares – a great incentive for dropping in on their Link-up missionary.



BOTTOM LEFT: Helping with the shower conversion (Photo: Tandem TV)

THEY MAY BE SMALL IN NUMBER BUT FRENCH BAPTISTS HAVE A BIG OUTLOOK ON MISSION. WRITES **PHIL HALLIDAY**

Going big on mission

he French Baptists are a missionary people, engaged in mission at home and abroad.

There were only 30 Baptist churches in the whole country when the French Baptist Union founded the European Baptist Mission (EBM) in 1954 along with the Swiss and German Baptists.

The needs in France were enormous but that did not prevent the French from looking beyond their own borders to the rest of the world.

The first country to which the EBM sent missionaries was the former mission field of the German Baptists, Cameroon. The work spread to Sierra Leone in 1965, to South America in 1979, to the Central African Republic in 1984, to Mozambique in 1992 and, two years ago, to Guinea.

This year the EBM sent missionaries to South Africa.

Today the EBM comprises the Baptist unions of 12 European countries and, overseas, the work of more than 50 missionaries. They work in:

- Churches, as pastors, chaplains and evangelists.
- Hospitals, as doctors, midwives, nurses and tutors.
- Schools, as teachers, headmasters and educational consultants.
- Agriculture, as advisers and foremen.
- Construction, as engineers, craftsmen and architects.
- Theological education, as lecturers, translators and writers.

Of these, more than 20 per cent are French. There are currently 11 adults and 13 children from France serving with the EBM, all in Cameroon and the Central African Republic.

The Baptist churches in north Cameroon have experienced great blessing and dramatic growth in the past three decades. In 1964 there were only 38 church members; 32 years later, there are more than 15,000.

French missionaries are involved largely in training church leaders but there is also a development programme which includes medical and agricultural help.

Baptist churches in the Central African Republic are also enjoying rapid growth. In the early 1980s, when French missionaries were invited to help, there were 14 churches and 8,000 members. Two years ago, this number had risen to 170 churches and membership was 55,000. Here French missionaries were also involved in training church leaders at all levels.

At this year's French Baptist Assembly in May, the president of the Missionary Commission spoke of "striking statistics". He pointed out that the French Baptists were sending missionaries to African countries where the Baptist unions were 10 times larger than the French Baptist Union.

But there was no suggestion of withdrawal or talk about greater needs at home. Rather, there was a call to more genuine partnership, as they learn from the African church, and a challenge for French Baptists to rise up and take the gospel to the countries in the "10/40 window" - those between latitude 10deg.N and 40deg.N where there is the greatest concentration of unreached people.

As in 1954, the needs in France are enormous – only 0.6% of the nation are evangelical Christians and there are only 110 Baptist churches – but French Baptists are still looking beyond their own borders to the rest of the world, seeking to fulfil the great commission of their Lord Jesus Christ.



Phil and Rosemary Halliday are working with the BMS in pastoral work in Massy, a suburb of Paris.



That's the challenge being presented to young people by the BMS this autumn. "Get Real" is the title of an outrageous new roadshow which aims to challenge young people in their teens and twenties to put their faith into action and get involved in world mission. During October and November, BMS Youth and Children's Co-ordinator Phil Marsden and a special 28:19 UK Action Team made up of young people from overseas will present the show at eight different venues throughout the UK.

Music, drama, testimonies and video will all be used in the fast moving, interactive presentation, and features such as the Mad Half Hour and The Toilet are sure to leave people flushed with laughter!

"We want to encourage young people to catch hold of God's vision for their lives," says Phil. "Everyone has a part to play in world mission, whether it's praying, giving, going or a combination of all three, and we want to challenge young people to lay their lives before God and make themselves totally available to be used by him."

For further details about the event nearest to you, contact your local organiser as found on the back page of this month's magazine.

New Year House Party

If you're aged 18+ why not celebrate 'Hogmanay' in style at our New Year House Party. Phil Marsden and Derek Clark will be hosting this special three day event with wacky games, powerful prayer, a ceilidh and the midnight bells! The event takes place at the Atholl Centre, Pitlochry in Scotland from 31 December 1996 to 2 January 1997. The cost is £48 full board and all bookings should be made via Helen Hamilton at the BU office in Scotland (Tel: 0141 423 6169).

FRANCE - IT'S NOT REALLY A MISSION FIELD, IS IT? THE PARIS ACTION TEAM

EXPLAIN WHY THEY DISAGREE. The Paris Action Team

ost people, if you ask them to guess where we were working as missionaries for the past seven months, say Africa or poor countries, not realising that we are, in the West, a great mission field ourselves. We, that is David, Oliver, Barney and Margaret, were sent to France to work alongside a missionary couple in a Baptist church 20 km south of Paris in the 'banlieue'. We faced the daily difficulties, not of poverty or strange diets but of modernised culture where the public are more concerned with buying the latest car or wearing the latest fashion then they are with God. In fact, religious education is forbidden in schools and, instead, they learn philosophy, which has created an intellectual, individualised nation leaving spiritual welfare sadly lacking.

So, imagine our joy when, after a couple of months' work abroad, we entertained about seventy Parisiens for a traditional English Christmas dinner, over half of whom were non-Christians. They went away not only having eaten well but also having laughed, sung, played games and been exposed to the gospel. Some of these friends even wanted to come back to church having discovered there was more to our faith.

Most of our work though, was far less glamorous. The church we were working with is only about eight years old and has suffered from a lot of illnesses and needed all the encouragement we could give. We took part in their services and weekly meetings, as well as helping decorate the church building so that they had more pleasant surroundings in which to worship God.

It was difficult to witness to God in a community where there was no real centre and shutters were closed over windows at about 8.00pm as families settled down for their evening meal. This certainly taught us the need to persevere and to pray for the folk we met. All of us could tell you that our devotional lives have developed as we have had to place our trust in God. On Easter Saturday, we had a concert

where Pascal Tonzet and his friend sang and shared the good news. Just days before it took place, we had hardly sold a ticket. On the night only 20-30 people turned up. At first we were disappointed. After all the work and prayer we had put into the event, how could God allow us only twenty people? We realised, however, that God is in control and quantity is not always what counts. He often sees things in a different way to us and although numbers were small, they were richly blessed!

One of our main projects which brought us in touch with people outside the church was the schools work. We must have sung 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes' more times this year than in our childhood and it certainly gave us exercise for the week! We fairly sneakily performed two Christian

> music mimes on our last day in the schools as an illustration of communicating a message but otherwise our faith was being shown purely by our actions.

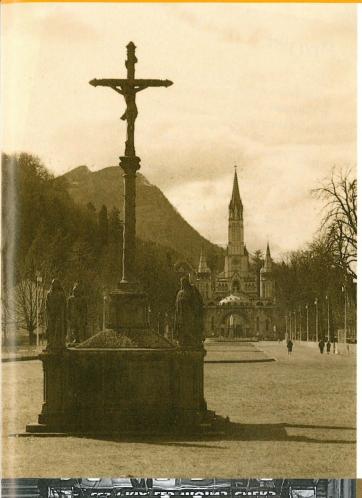
As a result of the seven months, we can testify to certain changes in our lives. Our muscles developed as we moved heavy pews in and out of the church; our French improved from stumbling through bible readings to preaching

sermons; our culinary horizons broadened; and, of course, our parents' telephone bills shot up! We saw not only the sights of Paris but also some of the difficulties involved in being a missionary over there. It is isolating being a Christian at times and especially abroad it requires real determination and persistence, yet our faith gave us the assurance that we were where the Lord wanted us to be. This was really important at difficult times when nothing seemed to be happening and we all returned thankful for our friends and family who supported us and determined to pray for the country we have left behind.

We believe God has great plans for France. Though we might not have reaped a harvest whilst we were there, we sowed seeds and trust that God will bring them to fruition in His own good time.

It is difficult to witness to God in a community where there is no real centre and shutters are closed at 8.00pm





"We believe God has great plans for France"

Team: Oliver Campbell - Smith Barney Green Margaret Sharman David Stevenson

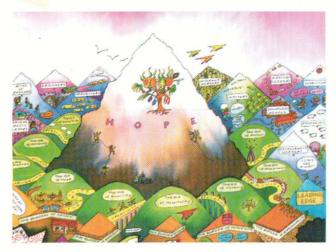


OUVERT TOUS LES JOURS INTERRUPTION



TAKE Ten things you didn't know about the developing world

- Calories from an animal origin make up on average only 6% of an African's diet. The corresponding figure for the rest of the world is 33%. 1
- 2 Tropical forests cover 7% of the earth's land surface, but contain at least half of the earth's plant and animal species. Deforestation continues on average worldwide at 0.6% per year. 1
- 3 In one year 30% of Calcutta's electricity was stolen by squatters taking it from overhead cables. 2
- In 1992, according to the World Bank, Mozambique was referred to as the world's poorest country. 2
- In Bangladesh it is not unusual for one toilet to be shared by 50 families. 1
- 6 95% of Bangladesh's development programmes are financed from abroad, and 95% of the country's budget is taken up in interest payments on its foreign debt. 1
- The indigenous peoples of Brazil are being decimated by diseases unknown to them until now – carried by people looking for metals, and the police who attack and murder them. 1
- 3 A quarter of Bulgaria's woodland is suffering from the effects of air pollution. 1
- 80% of people in Zaire are malnourished. 2
- 10 The Thai government has recently clamped down on farmers whose main crop was opium poppies. This has made it harder for the people to buy everyday things like rice as well as luxuries from Western culture such as radios, plates, plastic washing up bowls and tinned meat. 2
- 1 Taken from The World, A Third World Guide 1995/96, published by Instituto del Tercer Mundo
- ² Taken from Reader's Digest Guide to Places of the World, 1995



Prayer

When I open a door, open my heart's door; When I mash clothes, mash my heart; When I sweep, sweep my heart clean; When I use oil, make me wise like the wise virgins; When I light a lamp, give me light in my heart. Lord, if I build a wall, make my faith as strong as a house; If I tend a tree, give me more fruits of the spirit; If I tend sheep, look after me like a lamb; If I sow seed, sow Your good seed in my heart; If I write characters, write my name in heaven; If I draw mater, give me living water.

(Based on a Chinese prayer)

Last call for ROOTS TO LIFE

Harvest festivals are nearly upon us, and if the lot has fallen upon you to organise something, and you haven't, it's not too late to order this year's Operation Agri BMM & BMS joint Harvest Appeal ROOTS TO LIFE. This pack contains drama, worship ideas, children's and young people's material, OHPs and other ideas to help you help others. Each pack costs £5 (cheques made payable to Operation Agri BMM) and is available only from Operation Agri BMM, 14 Church Road, Newbold, Rochdale, Lancs OL16 5PU.

Baptist Youth making stand for justice and peace

It can often appear in our churches that Justice and Peace issues are taken up only by those over 40. Younger people share the same concerns, but don't always know about the right channels to motivate others or get things done.

Steve Blunden, the Association of Baptist Youth (ABY) Justice and Peace officer, has recently started a justice and peace group for Baptist youth. It's called Micah 6:8, and costs £5 a year to join.

Its first newsletter contains updates on Nestlé baby milk, El Salvador and beef eating; it also invites its members to write to the President of El Salvador, about the murder of Hector Recinos, and to Baronness Chalker about British government policy concerning aid and development in the Third World.

For more details write to Steve Blunden at 225 Northridge Way, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP1 2AA, or e-mail him at Steveb@virgo.wkac.ac.uk.

One world week 20-27 October 96

October may still seem an age away, but if you're planning on participating in One World Week (OWW) this year, it's time to be organising events. Last year almost 500 towns, villages and

communities took part.

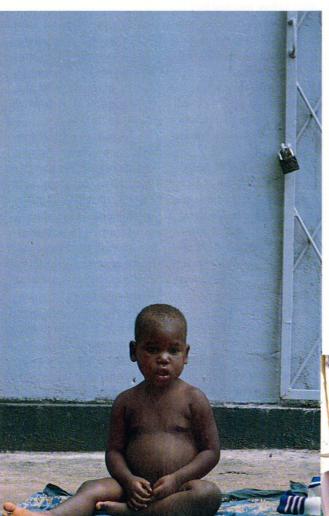
The study action kit Living on the Edge produced by OWW contains lots of things to help you and give you ideas: drama, quiz, ideas for meetings and discussions, stories from around the world, specially commissioned worship resources and comes complete with a twelve photo picture pack.

The cost per pack is £4.50 (three for £10.50, or five for £15.00) and they are available from: One World Week, PO Box 100, London SE1 7RT. Tel 0170 620 4444. Fax 0171 620 0719.

God's big plan

A new series of six studies from Interserve is designed for small groups. Each pack comes with leader's notes, background articles and photocopy masters of group members' sheets. The pack aims to help Christians discover God's purposes from Genesis to Revelation, and to discover their part in his plan.

God's Big Plan is available for a limited period at a special offer price of £5, instead of the normal £6 plus £1 p&p, and can be obtained from Interserve, 325 Kennington Road, London SE11 40H. Tel 0171 735 8227.



ACTION



One of the problems facing disadvantaged communities like the Dalit women of South India, shown on this month's card, is that of obtaining credit or loans at a reasonable rate of interest. For the same reason the Tshebedisano Mmoho Credit and Savings Co-operative was formed by women in Gauteng, South Africa in 1987. Credit and savings co-operatives encourage members to save regularly to obtain loans at reasonable interest rates and thus pay school fees, buy tools

At present the co-operative has more than 100 members and has saved R10,000. This is a small effort but it is one that has enabled those members who want to start their own businesses - an invaluable help in the new South Africa.

Members of the credit and savings co-operative enjoy equal rights to vote and participate in all decisions affecting the cooperative without regard to the amount the member has saved. This provides another opportunity for members to become familiar with democratic processes, co-operation and trust building. It is a small but significant part of building civil society and of people taking hold of their own future.

As a result of a process of consultation and workshops a Vision Statement was prepared last year for the co-operative which stated: "We are a group of women from different backgrounds who are committed to empowering women from our communities irrespective of their situations.

Credit unions, community banks and buying clubs are becoming an important part of national economic systems in many countries. They give people a chance to widen their skills, their choice and their experiences.

se send your card, with a positive greeting, to the women the Gauteng co-operative. The address is: o PO Box 29334, Melville, Johannesburg 2109, South







ere I am, send me -

TWENTY EIGHT YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE GAINED PLACES ON THE 1996-97 ACTION TEAMS. **SAM GIBSON** DELVES INTO THEIR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS AS THEY PREPARE FOR THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

'Whom shall I send?'

the resounding cry from the 28 young people embarking this month on their BMS 28:19 Action Team year. Fear, excitement and a passion for God combine as these young people join together for five weeks of practical, educational and devotional training prior to their overseas assignments.

Then suddenly, it will be October.

After months of preparation, the time will have finally arrived for the seven teams to fly out: six months in Brazil, Portugal, Zimbabwe, Malta, Jamaica, Thailand and Nepal. What will they face? Who will they meet? What will they be doing? The unknown faces these young missionaries but they are certain of why they are here.

"I want to show other people the love of Christ through my life and actions." - Steven Thomson, Jamaica.

"I hope to learn more about myself; what I'm good at and what I'm not." -Catherine Crump, Malta.

For some, it will be the

first time away from home, the first experience of extreme poverty, the first time they will have eaten curried vegetables for breakfast - many changes, many new experiences and not always pleasant. They know there will be trials but these young people also know that they will grow in faith through them. "I expect Nepal to be very

chall-

says

Chris

"This

Peacock.

enging

'This year with the BMS for me," will change my life and my one main hope is that it would change me to be more

> Christ-like Steven Thomson, Jamaica Action Team

will help me to grow as a Christian and see God moving in more power. I hope that I will be able to use my gifts effectively and develop them. I still have a lot to learn."

Action Teams provide these young people with the opportunity to offer something of themselves to the people they meet, the chance to "make the difference" for others as well as themselves.

In their preparations for the year, God is challenging and changing these young

people. During their training, they may have to face up to personal issues never before touched by God and as they go overseas, this process will continue.

For six months they will be living and working together with their team colleagues - people they will not have chosen themselves. But God will provide for and sustain them.

> "I really want to be used this year by God and to grow in my relationship with him in a different

country," says Ellen Armstrong, who is going to Thailand. "God has called me abroad this year mission really excites me and I desire to put my faith into action in this way. As I have grown up, I have received a lot from God and the church and now I want to give something back."

Alex Jones, of the Zimbabwe team: "Every time I am asked why I want to go to Zimbabwe the message of James 2:14-26 jumps into my head, that faith without

actions is dead. I want to put my faith into action and I see the 28:19 scheme as a way of doing this. I also see it as a learning experience. I want to put my faith into action throughout the rest of my life and see the scheme as a way of acquiring skills and finding gifts which will help me to do this."

There are practical considerations. Action Team members are asked to make a financial contribution towards the cost of sending them overseas. Churches often support their young people with cash, team members may go out to work and save in the months leading up to the beginning of the Action Team year, and there is help from a number of trust funds.

Many young people organise sponsored events to raise money.

With support from friends, Catherine Crump decided to combine her money-raising with helping others. She conducted a sponsored cook-in for the Cambridge Nightshelter Project, for the homeless based at Zion Baptist Church, Cambridge. She

Alex Jones - before his haircut - all set for Zimbabwe

and her friends baked cakes and pies for the shelter sponsored by other friends and family as well as her own church, Bethel Baptist, in Swavesey. With help from Zion Baptist Church, local companies and Catherine's old school, she raised more than £400 from this one event.

Other events were a sponsored "wiggle" by the Girl's Brigade group Catherine helps to teach, a car treasure hunt, "ye olde English meal" and a local carnival stall.

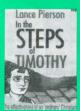
Alex Jones, of the Zimbabwe team, was amazed when his new haircut raised more than £200 to support his Action Team year. Losing his pony tail was quite a shock for poor Alex!

Ruth Bidnell, of the Jamaica team, took to the skies and threw herself from an aeroplane, while wearing a parachute. She raised nearly £,800 from the jump but was more amazed at people's generosity than at her own courage.

She says: "It was a great experience though very scary, but certainly well worth doing."

Book Review

In the Steps of Timothy by Lance Pierson, IVP 1995



Lance Pierson achieves several good things in a wellresearched and coherent

whole. He details the Timothy story vividly presenting guidance for families, younger Christians, young church leaders and their mentors, and for mission strategy.

Application is encouraged by points for reflection and sharing at the end of each chapter.

The characterisation of Timothy in relation to events and places illuminates their significance. Perhaps he too readily sees here his own model for team-management. But his handling of the Letters to Timothy I found new and stimulating, and his exposition of "apostle" and "deacon" brilliant.

While basically conservative, Pierson explores adventurously the implications of Timothy's role, and gives weight to Timothy as co-author of some Pauline letters. He includes extensive notes in an appendix and throughout distinguishes four levels of interpretation: information from the Bible, deductions, inferences, and hunches.

I found the imaginary reconstructions at the beginning of each chapter unhelpful, but less pedantic readers will probably love them!

Patrick Baker

Walthamstow Hall School just prior to the war. I read with horror and total disbelief the glowing centre spread (mh, June). In the first place to call children of missionaries Mish Kids, in my opinion is tantamount to labelling them as different from other children and frankly an insulting and abhorrent gimmick! Jacqueline Lang as present Head of

SIR - I was a boarder at

Walthamstow Hall should check on facts before making statements about the past such as: "The girls almost transferred their family affections to their school." What utter nonsense!

Perhaps she would care to know that nights without number in my nightmares I have walked or run down endless dark wood polished corridors, or stairs and more stairs, exactly like - guess where? -**Walthamstow Hall!**

I decided that as boiled eggs were

green I did not like them and I could not eat cabbage as it contained cooked slugs! Exaggerated? Not at all. I was kept in isolation for one whole year in what was called The Cottage some distance from the school. I had ringworm - a fungal infection - I thought I had the plague, and was lifted up to a window from time to time to wave to my sisters and others as they walked by.

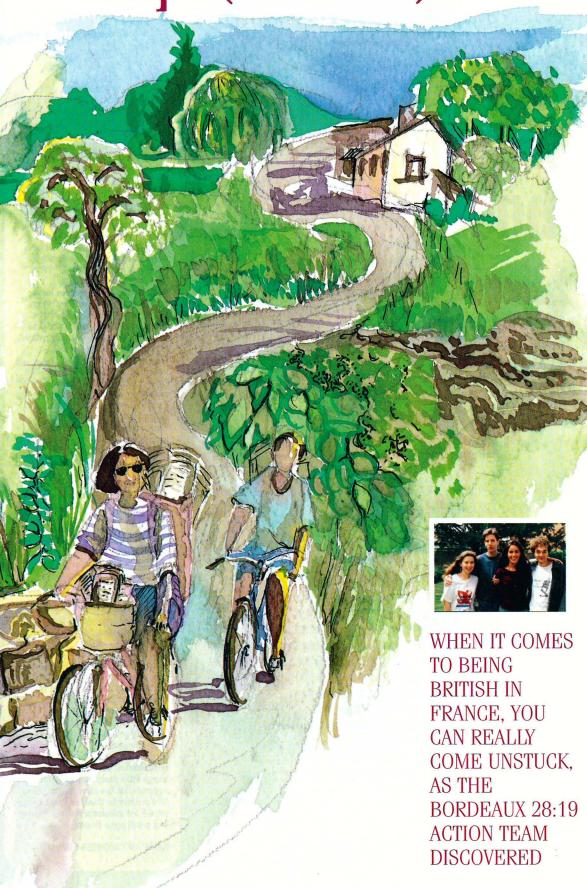
As I had no other toys but a teddy, I could practically run and jump on some stilts I was given in the garden. A tortoise was my only companion as I played and with thick grease and a mob cap to cover my shaven head, the village children would look through knot holes in the fence to laugh at me. I had no schooling during that whole year!

No, I did not resent my parents going abroad but I certainly did not have affection for the school. They say that it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good. For me the beginning of the war did me a good turn and ended my days at the boarding school of which I have no happy memories.

So do not imagine that the missionaries' children were all happy little souls as your article suggests. It is easier for people in this country to think so when giving money for missionary work. Money is a small price to pay.

NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED

A trip (or two) on the road



even o'clock in the morning is a little too early for that lazy species of would-be students, such as the four members of this particular Action Team, but as the city of Bordeaux grinds into life, Richard, Paul, Emma and Anna would blearily begin to

join the waking world. By French standards 7am is a little late to be clambering out of bed as many people start work at 7.30, but as it is also considered courtesy in France to be late, we could feel justified at our attempts to fit in with French culture by staying in bed that bit longer. The day would kick off for the baby of the team, Paul, with an all-essential trip to the boulangerie for our daily bread.

This visit, if not carried out, resulted in four very hungry people by 2pm; a lot of shops close for lunch and lunchtime often extends from noon until 3pm.

We would all meet together for prayer and coffee - naturally strong and black in true French style followed by a discussion on things that needed to be done that day.

Most of our work was directly linked to supporting the Baptist church in Bordeaux where we were based. However, it is not surprising that in the opening stages of our stay, any positive impact we may have had on the church was minimal.

This was due to the fact that as four young foreigners who had previously visited France on holiday, we made the mistake of assuming that we knew everything and that France, being western Europe, would enjoy the same culture as Britain.

Oops.

When we discovered that this wasn't the case, we made the even graver mistake of presuming that the British way of doing things was right and, therefore, the French approach was undeniably wrong.

Double oops.

As we had not prepared ourselves for any culture shock, the settling in process was longer than it might otherwise have been.

During that time we may well have offended many people in the church by airing our views on how we felt things should be done.

Fortunately people were tolerant of us and as we got used to the French way of life we began to see why things were done the way they were and were able to work much more effectively within a French context.

As a team we travelled around the south of France visiting churches and putting on evangelistic events.

The first meeting we held in Pau brought our expectations of evangelism in France down to earth with a bump.

Despite much publicity, only seven people turned up. That evening helped us to appreciate some of the hardships faced by Christians in France in talking about the gospel.

It was then that we shifted our goalposts; it was not our role to evangelise but, more, to encourage Christians in France to evangelise.

This we felt was a goal which, if attained, would have a longer lasting effect. We also believed it to be important as France is very closed to the gospel; statistics show that in door-to-door

work, only one person in 1,000 will respond. It was with this in mind that in the latter two months of our stay in Bordeaux, we started the mammoth task of reaching out to all the surrounding villages.

As a result of the prohibition of all religious teaching in schools since 1905 - France has been officially secular for more than 90 years - and the dispersed geography of villages, many people have had little or no opportunity to hear of the love of Jesus.

Armed with our leaflets, and with feet on pedals, we set about cycling through the French countryside to deliver 8,000 tracts.

Increasing time pressure meant we were able to distribute only 4,000 leaflets before we left France but the church in Bordeaux has committed itself to continue this outreach to the villages, and it is an encouragement to us to know that this work is continuing.

During our last few months in France we helped with services in both English and French, gave English lessons in schools and on a one-to-one basis, as well as helping on youth weekends.

Days would usually end in the same sleepy fashion in which they began, with each returning to our respective homes.

However, the French

hour in which to eat lunch.

Towards the end of our stay it was this warmth and hospitality showered upon us which touched us most about the people of France. The baker, who Paul had daily visited took to shaking his hand just before we left; a

real sign of acceptance.

With a "fare thee well, France" and a kiss on each cheek, we set sail for fair England.

Since we have been back we are still discovering the things we learned in

France but we are confident that much has been gained from our time with 28:19 and are looking forward to the next epoch in our lives.

Richard Ingold, Paul Brownnutt, Emma Rendell and Anna Willott spent six months as the 1995-96 BMS 28:19 Action Team working with Baptists in Bordeaux,

being an incredibly

hospitable nation, invitations

A typical example of a

least five courses, eaten in a

relaxed atmosphere. It is not

surprising that meals could

last more than three hours.

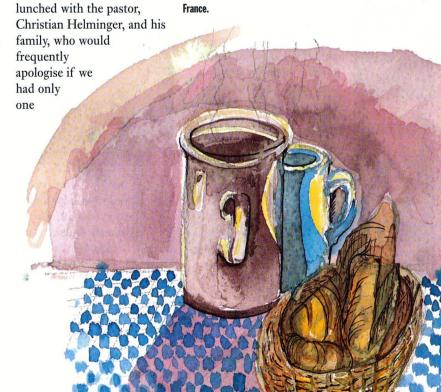
As a team we often

to dinner were frequent.

French meal would be at

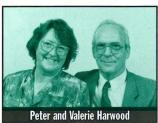
France: A different scene





prayerfocus

A regular update from BMS colleagues around the world compiled by Sam Gibson



Valerie is involved in Ryder Cheshire Home, an initiative which teaches physically handicapped people the skills they need to be able to find work. Valerie met a woman in the physiotherapy department who had suffered an epileptic fit while cooking and had fallen into the fire. She had lost most of one arm and the thumb from her other hand. The accident had occurred two years previously and she had gone to the home with no education, no parents and probably no job, looking for training.

One of the main aims of the mental health team with which Valerie works, is that people should recognise epilepsy and the fact that with medicine, it can be helped and such accidents avoided. This lady's village had not been reached with the news and even if it had been, she would probably not have been able to afford the medicine.

Education is such a gift we

all take for granted in the West – the availability of artificial hands and those trained to instruct and fit the use. Valerie says this lady's situation has spurred her on to find more activities which are suitable for disabled people, especially those with little or no education.

Please pray:

- for the continued success of Ryder Cheshire Home to integrate people with disabilities into the community with suitable jobs.
- for Valerie, that she would be encouraged by the achievements she has had.
- for this lady, that she may find the training she needs in order to have a better future.
- for the poor of Nepal, that there be an answer to their plight which is manifest in so many different areas of life.



Ihit Ghari is a leprosy settlement just outside Butwal. When a fire broke out in a house which had been built by refugees, it soon spread across the roof to four other houses. A man living in the fifth house was worried

El Salvador



David and Rachel Quinney Mee

Official figures have said that there has been a 36 per cent increase in violent deaths since the war ended, approximately twenty two a day, making El Salvador the second most violent country on the American continent.

David has only to walk round the small homes of San Rogue, a few kilometers up the edge of the volcano behind the church and he is met with disturbing stories: almost daily people he knows have their homes robbed (day or night) by masked and heavily armed men. Crimes are not reported as the police are ineffective, and the judicial system worse.

- for David and Rachel that their words and actions may truly be 'salt' and 'light' in El Salvadorean society
- for those oppressed and overcome by all the injustices and violence

his home would be next. The Christians in Jhit Ghari prayed with him asking the Lord to save his house – it did not burn. The man was so moved that he accepted Jesus as his Lord and Saviour that night and on the next Saturday morning he went to church to tell the congregation about it but was so overcome, someone else had to finish the story for him.

Frankie, who had arthritis diagnosed in her spine, is now able to walk without pain for much of the time. Two

other doctors have pronounced her clear of arthritis and she firmly believes that the Lord has healed her.

Please pray:

- praise God for his healing power and care.
- thank God that ex-leprosy sufferers, the outcasts of society, can witness to someone in this way and pray for this man as he embarks on a whole new life with Jesus at its centre.
- for continued health for Glyn and Frankie.

Americas



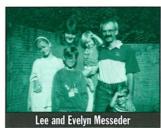
The Greenwoods, who are church planting in a favela area of Fortaleza, took a church service at very short notice when visiting a neighbour's family in the small village of Piranji, 200 km away from the bustle the city. At 7pm, while having tea with the lady who looks after the village chapel, they discovered she had called a special service for 7.30pm knowing there would be a pastor in town! Having gone to Piranji to relax, their only clothes were shorts and sandals. Soon they were on the platform, wearing clothes borrowed from the neighbours and scribbling furious notes on what they were going to say and preach. They not only survived, but were reminded of the beauty of fellowship.

Back in Fortaleza, the Congregação Batista em Genibau has purchased a

building with a small sanctuary, two side rooms and room for expansion. Everyone is mucking in at the weekends, doing what they can and providing building materials. The Greenwoods are concerned at the lack of male participation in the congregation and want to develop a special ministry for men. Many families suffer heavily due to the macho culture with fathers being dependant on drink, drugs and other women, resulting in a lack of responsibility in the home. The Greenwoods feel that the only answer is for men to find meaning for their lives in Jesus and the church must find ways to communicate that to them.

Please pray:

- that God would guide this church in searching for a new initiative to reach local men.
- for the women in the congregation who are caught in such a trap at home.
- that God's love and grace would reach the children, especially the boys, so that they would not be forced to follow in their fathers footsteps.



BRAZIL

Lee and Evelyn work at the **Dourados Baptist Seminary** as well as with the local churches. Since February, Lee has been working as temporary Dean of the seminary which gives him greater contact with the students but has led to some difficulties as he has had to deal with some of their personal problems. He also teaches four theological subjects. Evelyn has been asked to teach English to the first year students which she is thoroughly enjoying. The Messeders return to Britain on Home Assignment in December and are not yet certain if they will return to Brazil. There is much to take into account, especially the continuing education of their children.

Please pray:

- for Lee and Evelyn as they seek God's will for their family's future.
- for the seminary and

churches they are involved with if they do decide to stay in Britain, that there be people to carry on the work.

• if they stay in the UK, Lee will be looking for a job in the Baptist ministry.



NICARAGUA

Peter and Sheila have now completed their time in Nicaragua. They are considering an invitation from the Baptist Union of Trinidad and Tobago (BUTT) to organise an institute for the training of pastors, which it is hoped will produce a three year ordination course. The Brewers worked in Trinidad from 1970 to 1977 and from 1989 to 1991 and during much of that time, Peter was involved in training pastors and leaders in the churches. The society is exploring the invitation from BUTT along with Peter and Sheila.

Please pray:

- for Peter and Sheila as they seek God's will for their future.
- examination of the proposal to ensure it is practicable.
- for the society as it discerns God's purposes for a continuing relationship with BUTT.
- Peter and Sheila have just completed a period of Link church visiting and now need to settle back into daily life in the UK.

Margaret Pitt

Margaret has been in Novi Sad, Serbia as a volunteer with BMS since March this year. She is teaching English in a Bible College there. Almost inevitably she comes across refugees from the war - 120,000 from Bosnia and Croatia have arrived in Novi Sad as a result of the war. A humanitarian relief organisation, Tabita has been set up in the college and is run by the director's wife and helpers from the church. Clothing, bedding and furniture is given out when available and each family can have a food parcel every two months.

Please pray: • thanking God that there are Christian relief agencies with which refugees can make contact. • that the helpers may not feel overwhelmed by their task and may continue to show the love of God in all they do.

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Europe



David works with the European Baptist Federation in administration and a variety of engineering projects. Some of his time is spent working in mountain villages trying to bring the people a drinking water supply and irrigation channels from mountain springs for their crops. He is also involved in building a road to remote mountain villages to enable villagers to take their produce to market and for missionaries to reach them with the gospel.

Life in the mountains can be very hard. David was caught out one day when it began to rain heavily. There were landslides all along the road making it impassable by Land Rover so he was forced to walk back down. Along one of the mountain track, he passed a dead cow in a ditch which had been struck by lightening. To the farming family which owned it, this meant a loss of £200 of their livelihood - . Further down the track David passed a lady trying to dig a channel with a pickaxe to stop the water flooding through her home.

Yvonne has also been working in the mountain villages. Emergency repairs have been carried out to the central clinic in the village of Noya. This is helping to break down people's initial suspicions. They are becoming responsive, realising that all of this work is being done in the name of Jesus.

Please pray:

• for in-roads in the villages for the gospel to be shared alongside practical aid.



FRANCE

Wayne and Wendy have been enrolled at Les Cedres language school in Massy, a suburb of Paris, since they arrived in France in January. They will be working in France after their language study is completed but they do not yet know where. Their local supermarket has recently begun selling Heinz baked beans which means they're quite happy to stay in the country now!

Please pray

- that the Hadleys would soon discover where they will be placed.
- for their two young children as they settle into school and pick up a new language.



BELGIUM

Stuart and Joyce have discovered that language study can be an ideal place to share your faith. They have been able to share with their classes and individuals why they are undertaking language study and to tell them of the love of God. In his final exam, Stuart chose the subject God to speak on and shared with her about knowing God personally and how that was possible - an added bonus was that he passed! He and Joyce were also able to give out some tracts and New Testaments to class friends.

Please pray:

- for continued success in language training.
- for more opportunities to share the gospel through friendship.
- for the seed which has been sown in class mates to grow and blossom.



Many people are coming forward for baptism in Albania. Saverio and Betsy are involved in taking both adults and young people through the pre-baptismal courses in preparation for another baptismal service to be held late summer. Two such new believers are Valentina and Albana.

Valentina was abandoned by her husband eleven years ago, is unemployed and has four children. Her eldest daughter sought Saverio's help when her mother was taken ill. In fact she had had a haemorrhage eight days previously but had no money for doctors or medicines. She just lay in bed, hoping she would get better. He took her to hospital where she underwent various tests and four days of intensive care. Later, one Sunday in church she told Betsy "You saved my life" and at the same time she



zimbabwe



Jill and Phillip Igoe

Jill and Philip recently moved into their sixth residence since leaving the UK in February this year. They were forced to move from the tiny house they were renting following a storm which caused half of the roof to collapse and left them wading in an inch of water. Builders working on the house following the storm cheerfully pointed out the shortfalls in its original construction. It appears the budget did not even reach to cement to mix the mortar with! They are now renting a neighbour's house.

Work for the Igoes is beginning to build up and they have been busy visiting churches around the country. Philip has been leading a weekly training class for church leaders and pastors at a church in Mkoba and Jill has been going into high schools twice per week with Scripture Union, leading classes for O and A-level students, mainly aimed at AIDS awareness, but also looking at such things as family, self image, dating and marriage. From this month she hopes to begin work as a voluntary primary school teacher with a class of 11-year-olds.

The Igoes continue to struggle with language study. They feel they have come to a standstill and have been looking for someone in the church to coach them. One thing the Igoes have found strange about life in Zimbabwe is the view the Shona and Ndbele people have of white people. When Jill was chopping cabbage for a meal at a church conference, an older Shona woman approached her and asked in all seriousness, whether it would hurt her hands. They will not ask the Igoes to help with any cleaning as they don't think they can do it. Philip was then told by an African man that he thought European intelligence was bigger and better than African intelligence. They are amazed that the Igoes can speak a little Shona although most of them speak at least three languages!

Please pray:

for progress in language study and a person to teach the Igoes. • that they would settle well into their new home and be able to remain there for some time. • for their work as they take on new responsibilities.

asked to be included in the pre-baptismal classes.

Saverio and Betsy first visited Albana, then 19 years old, in September 1993 whilst she was serving a long sentence in the female prison. They told her they would pray for her and gave her a New Testament. Although not allowed to visit her again, Betsy continued to write and sent cassettes recorded with Bible meditations held in her home. She was pardoned last December and started coming to church on a regular basis. During a baptismal service in June this year she gave her life to the Lord. Forgiveness means everything to her; today she is a different person.

Please pray:

- praising God that he is at work in the country of Albania, for so long closed to the gospel
- for new believers such as Valentina and Albana that they may grow in their faith
- for other people that Saverio and Betsy are coming in contact with, that there may be opportunities to share the gospel

SEPTEMBER 1996 Arrivals

Chris and Sarah Mattock from Ferrara

Departures

David Payne to Kathmandu John and Norma Clark to Fortaleze Mike and Daveen Wilson to Mossoro Gwen Hunter to Kimpese Pat Woolhouse to Kimpese

Overseas visits

Reg Harvey to Estonia Alistair Brown to Estonia David Martin to Albania John Passmore to Albania and Estonia Andrew North to El Salvador Derek Rumbol to Zambia, Zimbabwe Sian Williams to Sri Lanka and India

Anonymous gifts

for May 1996

We are indebted to the generosity of those who give tothe work of making Jesus known through

TOTAL £1,693.00

Legacies

for May 1996

We are grateful for the support of those who remember the work of the gospel in their wills and we give thanks to God for the following

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Coulson Mr W E	1,900.00
Hambrook Mrs Doris T	. 100.00
Knighton Mr John C H	1,558.12
Moreman Miss	. 200.00
Selby Mrs Freda P	20.48
Towsend Mrs Beatrice	7,574.38
Tucker Mrs Winifred D	. 250.00
Turnbull Miss Mary	51.27
Waugh Miss Mary	. 100.00

TOTAL £24,295.93



Andy Stockbridge is BMS **Director for Constituency** Support having previously been involved in agriculture, consultancy and training.

He leaves the Society this Autumn to take up the post of Director of Resource and Support at Scripture Union in Milton Keynes. With him will go our prayers for a fulfilling career at Scripture Union. Andy says,

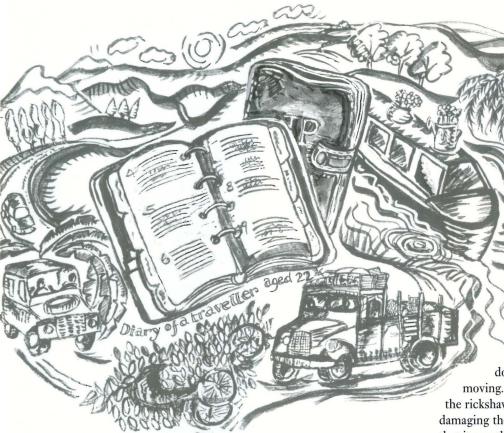
"My time has been a great learning experience and I feel privileged to have been a part of BMS work".





John Passmore takes a sideways view

Diary of a traveller, aged 223/4



omewhere in my past I remember hearing a Welshman reminiscing about "being there" on certain memorable rugby sporting occasions. Well, do you remember the night of the lost sleeping garment, and the ratatouille, not to mention the vasectomy by lamp light and the "velcro" kisses?

I was there! I saw it all and there have been many other things I've seen which would be far too embarrassing to publish in the pages of a missionary magazine.

I did wonder, on the night the robbers came, whether my time was up and there have been other occasions when I thought that it must surely be the end of life as I had known it. Being back in Europe has also opened my eyes. But having started to think about some of the other events I've witnessed, I must tell you about some of them. When else did I think my time was up? Well there was the unfortunate stumble by the Grand Union Canal and the inevitable splash as I hit the water. It was on one of those famous BMS summer holidays when a group of young people and leaders hired two narrow boats and spent all week, opening and closing lock gates.

The stumble happened when returning from a trip to a canalside shop to replenish the stores. If it hadn't been for the quick action of someone else dropping the supplies he was carrying and thrusting his arm down into the ever narrowing

gap, I'm sure I would have gone under, possible never to return!

That was the same day when one of the young people on the trip was nearly executed. It all started when he took over the rudder of the 60ft boat. After just about successfully navigating a low bridge on a sharp bend, while acknowledging the acclaim showered on him from the following boat, he failed to notice a fisherman with several rods and a keep net on the towpath just ahead.

The propeller of a narrow boat makes a nasty mess of such things and the irate angler nearly made a nasty mess of the wayward helmsman!

There was also the time when the

lorry in which we were travelling was flagged down, surrounded by a crowd and prevented from moving. A rickshaw puller said that the lorry had caused the rickshaw, loaded with tobacco leaves, to topple over, damaging the rear wheels. The mob became quite insistent

that it was the driver's fault and the situation looked decidedly awkward until the driver handed over some money.

Thinking of journeys, which I wasn't until now, there have been many when the end couldn't come soon enough.

Travelling north to south in Jamaica through the mountains as a passenger in a left hand drive Jeep when they drive on the left, at least in theory, had more thrills than a white knuckle ride at Blackpool's Pleasure Beach. It wasn't much fun, either, being thrown around in the back of a car driving by the back roads, through the mountains from Zagreb to the coast and down to Dubrovnik because the main routes were still closed by the fighting.

I was there, because wherever John goes he seems to take me.

Over the years, since I was given to him as a birthday present, we have become inseparable and he'd be completely lost without me, but that's another story. Time was, when I was younger, before my skin wrinkled and I had the minor operations which required stitching, I was something of a novelty and quite rare.

Then yuppies and the Thatcher years people made jokes about me. But all that was before personal organisers became electronic.

John Passmore is the BMS Europe Representative and spent 10 years as a missionary in Bangladesh.



THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY

Irrigation booms lie twisted and rusting, the pump house crumbling and fields scrubland. Forest has been cleared to make farmland but with the water source exhausted the project is abandoned. Sadly many well-intentioned initiatives are politically motivated or ill-conceived. My example is not unique. Inappropriate technology out of place, culturally unacceptable and unsustainable.

But there are many situations where we feel we can provide help. As agriculturalists, doctors, engineers, organisers, administrators we want to do something and that is where the problem is. We often interpret a situation or need in our own terms and then what we do can have tragic consequences. This is particularly so when inadvertently we recreate our own culture in another country.

When we examine a problem, we see it through our own eyes creating our own solutions. We need to look at problems from other people's perspective, seeking to listen and create solutions in partnership with those we wish to help. Something that has impressed me is the concept of intermediate or appropriate technology in

helping individuals and communities find local solutions to local problems. The principle is sustainability and self-sufficiency

For sustainable development, the absorbing, considering, reflecting time is always time well spent. As many will tell you, the solution arrived at collectively is often surprising. This approach also has the advantage of gaining the commitment and understanding of those with whom we are involved. We might consider progress to be slow but again that is only in our terms.

I originally studied agriculture and though I didn't need to do that to understand the meaning of the parable of the sower, the lessons there have always seemed to apply in many situations. We need to find a solution that will take root. As any farmer knows, different crops are suited to different soil and require different husbandry techniques. Some will be sown and harvested within a matter of months. Others can last for generations, requiring skill, expertise and resources to sustain them.

Hopefully with a partnership approach our good intention, effort, resources and time will yield for years to come.

Andy Stockbridge joined BMS at a time of structural change and has directed the 23 staff of the Constituency Support department at BMS in Didcot since May 1994. The BMS Annual Report that year, "Travelling Together," professed "Networking for Mission in the 90s". This year saw the first pilot pages for BMS on the world wide web pioneered by Andy.

This month Andy take up the post of director of resource and support at Scripture Union in Milton Keynes. Andy will be leading a team of around 30 staff. With him will go our prayers for a fulfilling career at Scripture Union and our gratitude for his pioneering leadership at BMS.



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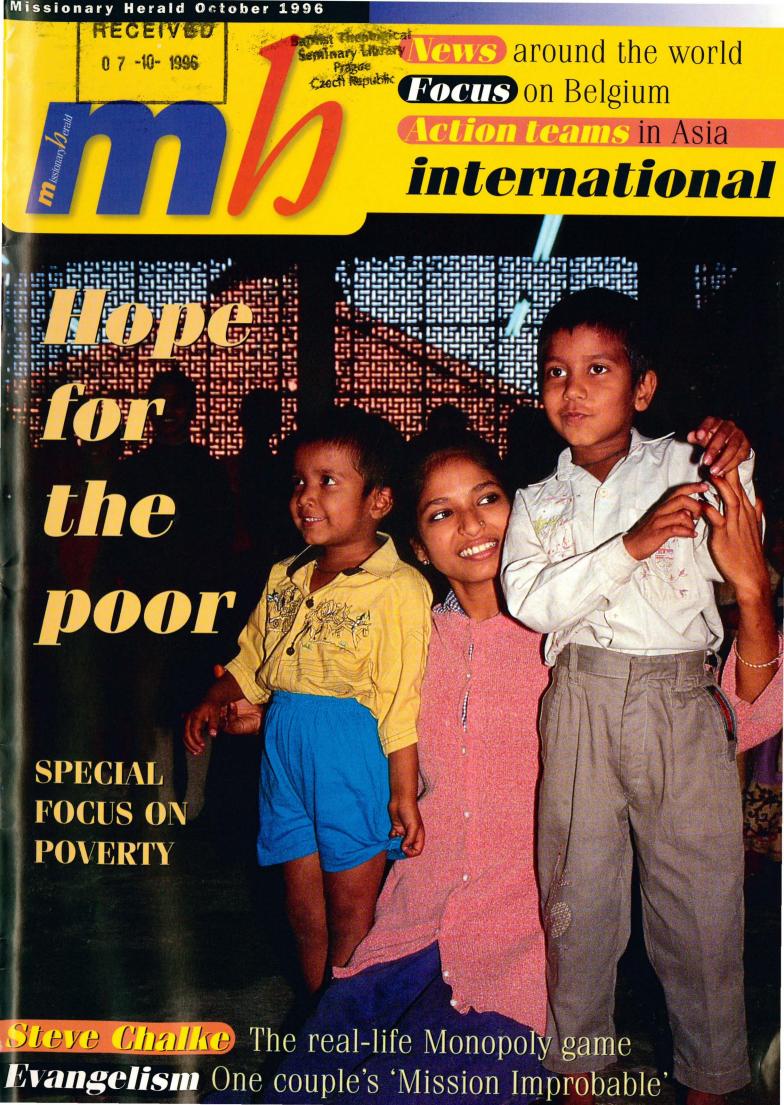
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Castleton Baptist Church, Cardiff
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Bromham Baptist Church, Bedford
Trinity Baptist Church, Bexleyheath
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In the grand scheme of things, we're not so badly off in Britain. This nation generally

does not witness the scenes of abject poverty which adorn the promotional literature of aid organisations trying to meet some of the needs of the Third World.

Britain is not trapped in the same kind of fiscal spiral into which developing countries have been squeezed through a combination of heavy loans and wildly fluctuating world market prices for their goods.

We are not living with the legacies of colonial occupation which capitalised on our raw materials.

Materially, we're comfortable.

What is more, the immeasurable riches of God's grace are available for our spiritual well-being!

We're in a very strong position to share our wealth . . . spiritually and materially.

Richard Wells

Missionary Herald, the magazine of the Baptist Missionary Society,

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Missionary Jerald

Cover Story
(CASH FOR GROWTH)
How credit schemes help fight poverty 4
Chaus Oballica
Steve Chalke
LIGADED DICE Life for some is like a game of Monopoly 9
Entertor some to tike a game of Monopoly
News Section
FOREIGN AND HOME NEWS
Taking a look at the world from a global perspective 11
Centre Special
(MISSION IMPROBABLE)
Pensioners with a fire for evangelism 18
Country Focus
Jan Kendall's regular national overview 20
zan Kendan's regular nadional overview
Mission File
(IDEAS AND OPINIONS)
Book reviews, Letter to the Editor
racts, figures and background resource material 20
Personal Prayer
WHO AND WHAT TO PRAY FOR
BMS 28:19 Action Team in Asia
Trayer points from Divide concagates around the world
John Passmore
A SIDEWAYS LOOK
Diary to diary: the missing hours
Waves
AN INDEPENDENT VIEW
Margaret Pitt is this month's guest writer
IN THE NEXT ISSUE
MEN
A worldwide look at their place in society
(FOCUS ON EL SALVADOR)
A land of contrasts
EDONT COVED Cabaal halvay Diply with Alcash and Dileash along shildren from

outreach programme.

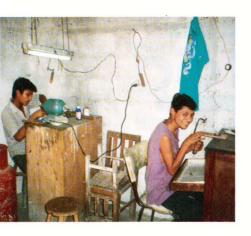
New Market, Calcutta, who are educated under an Emmanuel Ministries

PICTURE: Richard Wells



MONEY-GO-ROUND

Carefull FOR A GROWING



hurches and their mission agencies are becoming increasingly committed to holistic approaches to mission. They are learning to share in the whole of God's work in the world; mission to the whole person in the context of their family and community life. One consequence of this is that Christians are getting involved in community development initiatives. We now see projects which improve the welfare of the poor as an essential part of the ministry of the church.

One of the difficulties associated with traditional approaches to development is they have tended to ignore the economic context of the poor and so have failed to address the roots of poverty. In addition they have tended to rely on help being given from outside rather than on encouraging the poor themselves to find the right solutions.

The poor have been offered health care but this may have little long-term impact if the issues of diet and low

income which keep people unhealthy are not addressed. Good quality training is of little use if the economy cannot provide jobs. People may be helped to improve crops but if they cannot get the extra yield to market, their income will not increase.

Many development specialists have come to see revolving credit

funds as a means of overcoming these problems. A sum of money either saved by the participants or donated by an external agency, or a combination of the two, is used to make small loans so that people can invest in their own small businesses or micro-enterprises.

When the money is repaid it is used to finance further loans. If the interest rate or administration fee is sufficient to cover the costs of the scheme, including inflation and an allowance for bad debts, then it is possible for the fund to become self-sustaining and be a continuing source of investment funds for the community concerned.

There are many different kinds of schemes and they help different sectors of the community in different ways. One particularly impressive scheme is in Honduras where the agency World Relief has promoted a network of women's community banks.

In 1994 the programme had 113 banks with 4,000 members. Participants receive loans of as little as US\$50 which they invest in ways which will supplement household income. They sell tortillas, sweets or cosmetics, they make and mend clothes, they repair and sell fridges, they run small shops.

As a result their homes have more income and their children are better fed and better educated. They repay the loans little by little at weekly meetings and are encouraged to save.

The banks, largely self-organising,

Continues

ILLUSTRATION: SARAH PRENTICE





Cash ECONOMY



CREDIT SCHEMES ARE
POWERFUL TOOLS FOR
MISSION AND TO HELP
THE POOR FIND THE
RIGHT SOLUTIONS, BUT
THEY NEED CAREFUL
PLANNING, SAYS
STEVE FINAMORE









Careful Cash



Poverty drives the minister's wife on to the streets



are run by elected committees, so women gain experience in running meetings, looking after funds and keeping records. They take responsibility for solving the problems of their own communities and grow in confidence when they realise what can be achieved by working together.

Many groups invite teachers to their meetings to learn about primary health, have literacy classes or do Bible studies. In the right circumstances revolving credit schemes can be a tremendous tool for mission to the poor.

But there are potential problems. Some schemes offer loans to only a few residents of a given area. Their businesses may offer spin-off benefits for the community but it is also possible for the overall effect to be divisive. A scheme may encourage individualism and result in people working for their own benefit rather than helping communities work together.

Local churches need to be wary of becoming too closely involved with credit schemes. There is a temptation to favour church members over others and this means that the fund stops being a tool for mission. Furthermore, sometimes people do not make their repayments and the church officers, including the pastors, end up being

responsible for debt collection.

Next, loan funds which become too concerned about ensuring that they survive in the long-term become reluctant to take risks. This means that they end up behaving more and more like banks. In the end they may end up refusing to give loans to the poor – the very people they were set up to help.

Finally, many agencies establish credit schemes from ideological motives. They appear to believe that free market capitalism and entrepreneurship are going to save the world. As Christians we know that this is not true. These things are not always liberating; sometimes they are used to oppress people. Any mission tool must go hand in hand with the call to repentance and the proclamation of God's kingdom.

When used appropriately, revolving credit schemes can be a powerful tool for enabling poor communities to work for their own liberation. They remove the mystique from handling money and empower people to take control of their own lives. As such they are a powerful tool for the mission of churches and agencies which seek to share in God's mission in the world and to demonstrate in tangible ways that Jesus Christ brings good news to the poor.

Steve Finamore is minister of Westbury-on-Trym Baptist Church, Bristol, and economic development consultant to Tear Fund.

sually, Rosemary Williams is in church on Sunday mornings. In fact, as the minister's wife, people expect to see her around.

So it would not have been surprising to see eyebrows raised one Sunday morning when . . . she wasn't there.

She wasn't in the Sunday school. And she wasn't at home.

She was out on the streets, standing on the pavement of the High Street . . . watching the small town of Alcester, in Warwickshire, come alive - bleary-eyed residents creeping out for the odd carton of milk or loaf of bread, early-to-rise readers buying their Sunday papers, parents out with their children, pet owners walking their dogs, friends from the five worshipping communities going to church.

The minister's wife had been driven there

Not that The Manse was about to be repossessed or that the minister keeps her short on the housekeeping . . . Rosemary had taken the message of the world's poverty sufferers on to the streets of her

It was Alcester's annual street market and she was manning a Traidcraft stall, along with many other charity groups in the town. She saw it as a chance to put fairly traded goods in front of a different group of customers and to explain about fair trading.

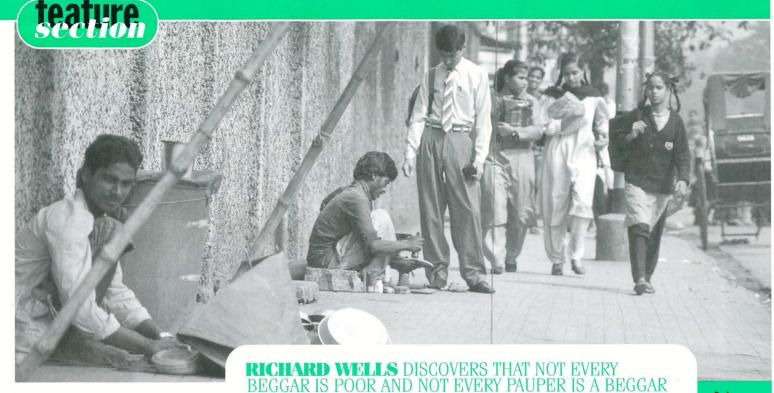
Traidcraft is one of a number of organisations which provides an outlet for the skills of craftspeople in Third World and developing countries by marketing a wide range of products and paying the makers a

fair price to give them a better standard of

As Rosemary sat on the pavement with her stall, waiting for the market to open, she reflected on other pavement people of the world.

"I couldn't help thinking of the streets of Calcutta, Dhaka, Rio de Janeiro, Bangkok Nairobi and so many other big cities," she says. "People on the pavements for a lifetime - cooking, eating, sleeping, being born and dying there. They have no choice no employment, no money, no home.

"Traidcraft and other similar organisations are working to help such people, giving them employment and paying them a fair wage in their villages, so that they don't have to flock to the big cities . . . and sit on the pavements." •



ou hardly leave the dowdy airport building in Calcutta before they're there. They emerge with alarming speed from the anonymity of the crowd and attach themselves, burr-like, as you scan the potholed car park for your lift.

They can be alone or with partner and small child in tow. They always seem to wear pathetic, pleading faces.

They are the beggars.

They plead their repetitive script in faltering English as you stumble, baggage-laden, searching for your lift.

Compassion, come on, where's your compassion? You reason with your conscience that you don't have a hand free to offer anything and, anyway, you don't have Rupees.

"No Rupees, no money." But they stick with you. It's almost as though they can read your conscience . . .

Calcutta's streets are littered with beggars, many in various states of limblessness but nonetheless agile. Their pleading faces penetrate. But you recall the travel handbook which warns you not to part with cash; rather, give to one of Calcutta's missions to the poor.

This advice is supported by those working among the poverty-stricken of Calcutta's 14 million population, among them Emmanuel Ministries (EM), an evangelical Christian group who work with streetchildren at headquarters rented from the BMS.

These are the ragpickers of the city. They come in for breakfast, a bath and

The Begging

a morning of school lessons they would not otherwise have received. Their forlorn-looking mothers sidle through the gates to look and disappear back to the slums or on their daily mission of industry – to sift others' throw-aways.

They seem to be very discreet. And they don't appear to be begging. But there is no doubt - they're poor.

On a tour of the city's slum area in the EM minibus, we are approached by a plainly-dressed woman holding a young child, hoping for alms from "the tourists". There is a brief dialogue with the driver and she moves on.

"She's refused our help many times," he explains. "She'd rather beg. It's good business."

And so it is. We see a pathetic wizened whisper of a woman crouching in the gutter, receiving the occasional coin from passers-by.

I stand at a discreet distance and raise the camera. Suddenly this mild, pleading figure contorts in anger, releasing a torrent of Bengali towards me. Our companion smiles: "She's been there for years. She lives in a nice house and her daughter went to a good school," he says.

Not everyone who occupies a space on Calcutta's cramped and dirty

pavements is in the begging business. There are scribes, repairers, barbers, shoeshiners . . . You have to look carefully to find those whose poverty excludes them from even the most basic necessities. You might just pass them by because they blend so well into the constantly moving streetscene.

Thankfully there are those who are atuned to the signs. Like the Revd Vijayan Pavamani, whose enthusiasm and vision to reach Calcutta's lowest caste with the love of Jesus fires the hearts of Emmanuel Ministries' teams who work daily with streetchildren.

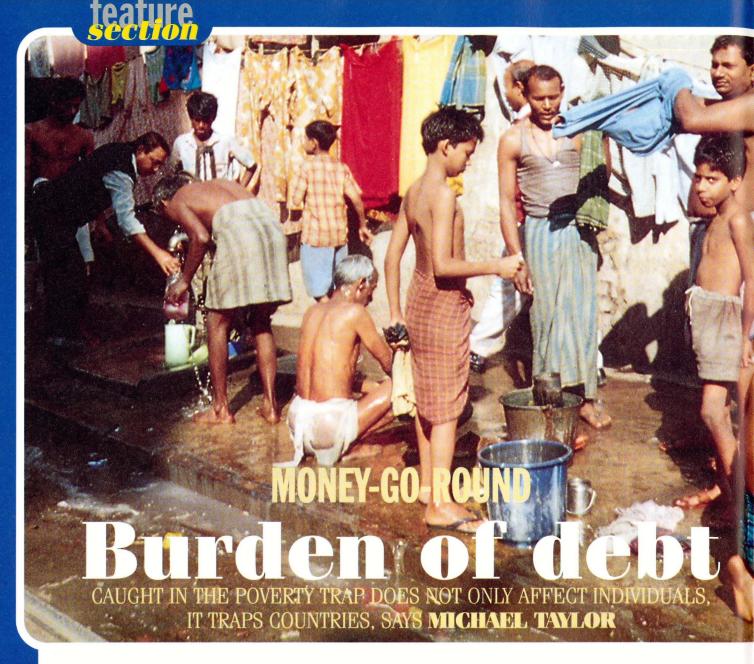
Like Mother Teresa, from whose mission a few doors along the street spill streams of white-garmented Sisters of Mercy to visit those in need and to search for others who might be.

This diminutive lady's sparkling eyes and pin-sharp mental machinery are a clue to the vision which, like Pavamani's, has fuelled the enthusiasm of hundreds of volunteers.

Brandishing a leaflet, she puts her hand on my arm. She'll want money; could this be the salve for my airport conscience? I begin to reach for my Rupees – but . . .

"Pray," is her single request. "Please pray for us." •

Business as usual: Calcutta's crowded pavements



n March I was in Jamaica, a country which looms large in the history of the BMS. I spent a day in one of the worst slums in Kingston. The smell is enough to drive you away but the smiles and determination of the people draw you

They were celebrating the opening of a marvellously hygienic toilet - to be shared between 10 families! It would help to keep down the level of disease.

The Jamaican government would like to spend money on better health care for its people, but it can't afford to. It has to spend what money it has on paying its debts. That is the inhuman face of our global economic system, and if it is inhuman, it is also ungodly.

Uganda, to take only one more example, is at the centre of an AIDS epidemic. If you need to blame anyone you can hardly blame the children, but they suffer from it as well. The government spends £1.69 per person on health and £19 per person on debt

In many countries, poverty cannot be tackled until the burden of debt is lifted.

If you think loans to poor countries are acts of generous kindness by rich countries, remember it suited the West to make the loans in the 1970s to earn interest for itself on otherwise idle capital.

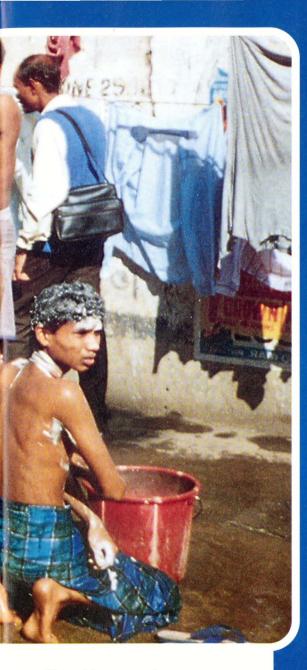
If you think debtors should repay their debts, remember that many countries have long since repaid the money they originally borrowed, but interest rates have shot up. In 1993 sub-Saharan African governments paid

£169million more to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) than they received from it.

If you think poor countries should get on their bikes and earn their keep, remember that African countries have increased their exports by 50 per cent and could have paid their way if prices on the world market had not fallen.

If you think that government aid goes to help the poorest in Africa, remember that over half of it is used to repay rich creditors like ourselves in a crazy money-go-round.

If you think this is all economics and has nothing to do with our faith, read what the Bible says about selling the needy for a pair of shoes, and putting the last first, and debt forgiveness and justice and good news for the poor in the year of God's Jubilee.



These debts are owed to our government - which has tried to persuade the G7 countries to do something about them without too much success - and to the World Bank and the IMF for which our government is responsible, and to the commercial banks where some of us hold accounts.

If you want to do something about it, write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer at the Treasury in your own words and tell him you want these debts dealt with once and for all; and then join the campaign for debt forgiveness being mounted by churches and others as a marvellous way to celebrate the millennium.

And make it a Jubilee year.

Michael H Taylor is Director of Christian Aid, an official agency of British and Irish churches.



LOADED DICE

Life isn't fair. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

If you've ever been tempted to doubt the truth of this statement, try playing Monopoly. Though all players start from a level playing field, a system is quickly built which works in favour of some and, at the same time, cripples others. Exactly how unfair it all is becomes obvious if everyone agrees to swap positions once all the properties have been bought. The worse your hand, the harder it is to stay in the game. In fact, it's virtually impossible to recover if all you inherit is the Old Kent Road and the Water Works! By contrast, it takes very little skill to win if you have the good fortune to be handed Park Lane, Bond Street and their sets. Rich players get richer while poor players lose even the little they have.

Poverty is a massive, global and urgent problem. According to UNICEF, for example, 35,000 children under the age of five died every day in 1990 from preventable causes linked to hunger and malnutrition - that's almost 1.3 million needless deaths in one year. More than one every 2.5 seconds! And 1990 wasn't unusual; estimates of annual infant death from povertyrelated illnesses vary between 12 million and 15 million, while the World Health Organisation calculates that one third of all the world's children are malnourished.

A few years ago, my friend, Dr Tony Campolo, made himself unpopular in some circles when he told an audience of British Christians that "40,000 children died last night, and most of you don't give a shit!" There was a shocked silence as people wondered if they'd heard him correctly. But the well-known Baptist minister wasn't finished. "What's even worse," he went on, "is that most of you are more offended by the fact that I just said 'shit' than by the fact that 40,000 children died yesterday!"

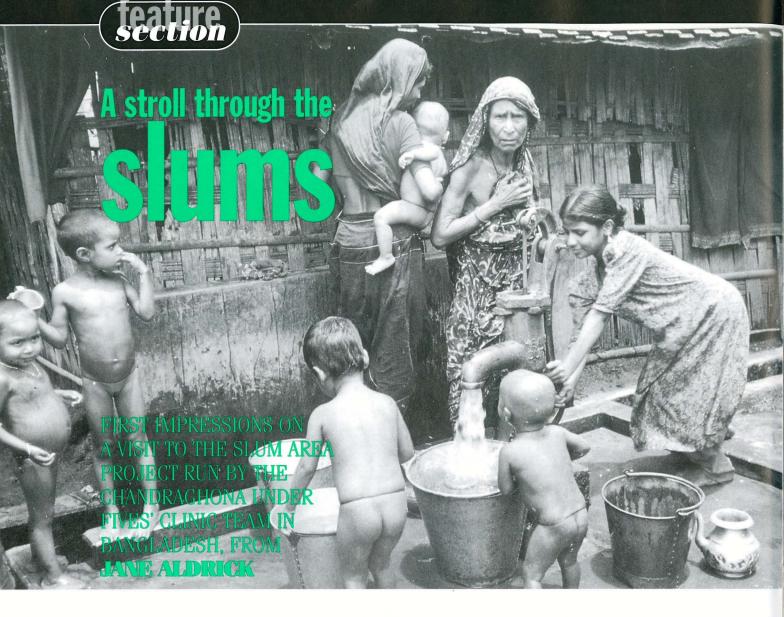
So what should Christians be doing to seek justice, encourage the oppressed, defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow (Isaiah 1:17), as the Old Testament prophets and New Testament writers constantly exhort us to do?

Our first response to poverty, injustice and oppression has, quite rightly, been charity, aimed at alleviating some of their more dramatic consequences. But, to continue the Monopoly analogy, letting another player off their rent when they land on your Mayfair hotel, or even giving them a generous hand-out, without taking any measures to alter the system itself, only prolongs their agony: sooner or later they'll be forced to sell what they have to cover their debts and this will make their position in the game even worse.

The problem, as Archbishop Helder Câmara — shortlisted for the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his actions on behalf of Brazil's poor - famously lamented, is that, "When I feed the poor, they call me a saint; when I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist." Ironically, in spite of the example set by heroes like Wilberforce and Shaftesbury, many Christians are wary about becoming politically involved and working to change the system. Somewhere along the line, we've swallowed the misguided notion that religion and politics - especially party politics - don't mix. It's a dirty, secular game that truly spiritual men and women should avoid.

The truth is, however, that political involvement is all part of our Christian responsibility. (In fact, the word "politics" literally just means "citizenship".) And in reality, even the most politically-allergic Christians get involved in political issues when it suits them: eg abortion, divorce and Sunday trading. But our full-blooded involvement isn't a case of straying from our Christian commitment to fight poverty and injustice. Rather, it's an essential part of it, as we seek justice, encourage the oppressed, defend the cause of the fatherless (and) plead the case of the widow.

STEVE CHALKE IS INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR OF OASIS TRUST



amera rolling? ACTION! I'm on a film set - is it Ghandi? Heavy monsoon rains torrent along this muddy lane. Deep swirling pools of refuse and sewage combine to make walking hazardous. A cast of thousands. Smiling naked children, ragged saris and lunghis and a tee-shirt recommending GOLF.

Alas – this is no film set. This is horrifically for real. I am moving into the inner-city riverside slum settlements of Chittagong.

My beautifully sari'd health worker guide, my black umbrella and my Fuji camera conspire to make me feel like the Queen. The bush telegraph buzzes and the slums erupt with curiosity to stare at my wealthy, white skin. I feel ashamed!

Begging bowls, the sick, the lame. White-eyed blind old men, desperate mothers with baby on hip. In the hubbub we're invited and jostled across the open sewer into a leaking mud slum. Lying on a rotten piece of old wood is the deformed 50lb frame of an old man, a frame that I wouldn't have believed could sustain life.

Crippled for 15 years with polio, this man presented

us with his plight. He was a beggar, wheeled daily out to beg and his garry (trolley) had finally broken. Could we give him money for its repair?

Around most corners in Bangladesh is yet another picture of desperate, irreconcilable poverty. My loose change could repair his garry but what then of the blind new mother? The limbless child?

A stroll through Chittagong's slum streets with BMS missionary Sue Headlam and her team of Under Fives' Clinic workers created in me massive confusion and conflicts. Where is Jesus here?

In the slums this new Christian initiative provides health care – ante and post natal care, treatment of illness, health education, an immunisation

programme and family planning. All are offered to the slum's

mothers and children. Yes, this is Christian action.

Alas — this is no film set

The deformed man with his broken garry? What's to be done for him? But the bright-eyed, generous hearted lively children who danced around us have the right to health and some sort of hope on this the lowest rung of the world's ladder.

My stroll through the slums silenced

This is a place where hope and despair meet.

Jane Aldrick is a journalist who attends Moortown Baptist Church, Leeds.

MISSION NEWS FROM HOME AND ABROAD

Four head for foreign parts

Four new mission candidates have been accepted by BMS General Committee, which met at Loughborough Baptist Church.

School teacher Anne Roberts, head of biology at Llandrindod High School, in Wales, will work in Albania, supporting women's and young people's work.



Anne (44) was educated in Wales - at Holyhead and Barry – and after nine years with the Medical Research Council, she took a London University Post Graduate Certificate in Education before teaching in the Ruislip and Northwood area of Middlesex.

As a member at Ruislip

Baptist Church, she sat on its missionary executive committee, and on moving to Llandrindod Wells, where she belongs to the Newlife Pentecostal Church, she helped to start a Youth for Christ group.

Anne is currently taking a Certificate in Christian Studies and will start a year of training in the summer to include theology, crosscultural studies and a course on working with children and young people, during which time she will link with a Baptist church.



BMS volunteer Geoffrey Timms has been accepted for full-time agricultural work in Albania.

Geoffrey, a member of Camberley Baptist Church, Surrey, has been a volunteer in Albania since November 1994, working with a seed distribution project, in agricultural education, computer training and English teaching.

While there he has taken part in new worship group development and leadership.

Geoffrey (23), who has an agricultural economics honours degree from London University, will spend a year at St Andrew's Hall, Birmingham, to study for a Certificate in Mission and undertake horticulture training. He is expected to return to Albania in summer

Chartered engineer Anthony Sykes and his wife, Judith, have been accepted for service in Vellore



Hospital, south India.

The couple, members of Norton Baptist Church, Stockton-on-Tees, are to spend a term at St Andrew's Hall for mission and crosscultural studies, and expect to leave for India early next year, provided a visa can be obtained for a civil engineer's post in Vellore.

Anthony (34) has worked with AMEC Civil Engineering since graduating from Loughborough University in 1984. Judith (30) works at a Christian family home for the mentally handicapped.

Both are involved in youth leadership and teach on Sunday mornings.

Memorial fund for training leaders

A project to raise £1,800 to support and encourage women in training for Christian ministry has been launched in memory of former BMS missionary Ruth Page, who died in July.

Ruth, a life deacon at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church in London, served with the BMS in Zaire between 1945 and 1975. During her service she was highly regarded for her leadership in education and in the life of the church.

The church which, through its Christian Connections



UK-SA organisation, has enabled students and leaders in South Africa to start and continue studies, wants to continue this work through a Ruth Page Scholarship fund.

The aim is to send four women to a school of theology, enable two women to continue a degree or diploma course, send 10 church leaders on a weekend theological seminar and

allow three students to attend a one-week theological seminar.

It is hoped to raise the £1,800 necessary to achieve these aims before Christmas.

Cutting Edge Carolyn at the Leading Edge

BMS President Carolyn Green was among a strong line-up of speakers at Leading Edge, the Baptists' first Bible week, held in Norfolk at the beginning of August.

Although not planned as part of her national tour - At the Cutting Edge - to inspire church members and leaders in world mission, Carolyn grasped the opportunity to lead a seminar - BMS, The New Vision.

Sharing the platform with speakers like Steve Chalke, David Coffey, Steve Ibbotson, Douglas McBain, Colin Marshall and Rob Warner, Carolyn was encouraged to hear the challenge repeated to "Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and ends of the earth mission"

While her seminar unpacked the new BMS vision and strategy for the 400-strong event, Carolyn smiles as she points out that the BMS vision has always been the same to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"I changed the 18th century words to the ones we use today and I showed by colour and word pictures what's going on with God in BMS round the world," she said. "I hoped to open up a new vision in those who came to the seminar.'

She realised that she was not having to work very hard; Christians at Leading Edge were on her wavelength. "I have not heard such strong support of BMS in other quarters," said Carolyn. "The challenge to world mission was exciting and to have the BMS available as the means for Baptists to do this was thrilling. I wish there had been more folk there to hear - but there's always next

Leading Edge, which aimed to be a lowcost family event to encourage Baptists in their Christian faith, in their salt-and-light mission to the nation and in their desire for God to revive the church, is already scheduled for next year.

year!"

Among the speakers at the event – from August 2 to 9 – will be Ian Coffey, Steve Gaukroger, Rob Gordon, Norman Moss and Rob White. Youth events, similar to those run by Dennis Pethers and Viz-a-Viz this year, are also planned.

Meanwhile, Carolyn's national tour continues this month with breakfast and lunch meetings for church leaders in the Greater London area, and celebration meetings for all ages at Haven Green, Ealing, west London, and Trinity, Bexleyheath, in south east London.

• For At the Cutting Edge details and contact telephone numbers, please turn to the World Mission Link news section on Pages 16 and 17.







01235 512077

lf you haven't yet ordered your Christmas cards, don't delay order from us.

BMS Christmas greetings cards are great value for money and proceeds from their sale go to help the work of sharing the gospel overseas. There are three different

designs - a calligraphic card in a pack of 10 for £1.95 and two picture designs at £1.95 each for packs of 12. If you order five packs, you'll get them for the price of four.

New out this month is the latest BMS video, Making Jesus Known. It shows, in six short programmes,

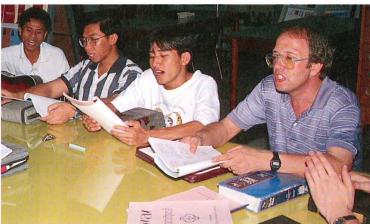
where we feel God is leading us as a missionary society as we approach the 21st century.

There's a free workbook for personal or group study and the package costs £9.95. Order it through the new BMS Christmas

Christine Neilson — Telephone 01235 512077 — Christine Neilson

Release into the w





The small Christian community throughout Thailand waits with eager anticipation for the release of 35 young graduates crammed with theological training and bursting with fresh enthusiasm.

They will have spent three or four years accumulating knowledge, skills and some work experience through the faculties of the Bangkok Institute of Theology (BIT).

Now they get the chance to do it for

Actual hands-on experience . . . This is the class of 96, and they're raring to go.

They seem almost too young to be let loose on the Christian Church in Thailand. After all, they look no older than A-level students. But what they lack in wisdom and experience, they can more than make up for in commitment – they've heard God's calling and there is no holding back.

Thirty five full-time Christian workers in a country covering an area of 513,120 square kilometres with a population of more than 59 million may seem a bit thin on the ground. But the church is not very big -2,000 small congregations, outnumbered one to 12 by Buddhist temples.

Thai society, dominated by a strong cohesive Buddhist culture, is not readily accepting of another belief which appears foreign, so growth has been hard to come by since protestant missionaries started their intensive gospel efforts 160 years ago, and stagnation and nominalism figure in church history.

Yet, when you examine the kinds of posts these 35 fledgling theologists will be taking up, you realise that the vision of the church in Thailand is changing. Far from being a pastoral backwater where they will be able to shepherd small flocks in tranquil religious sterility, this is front line stuff.

BMS missionary Geoff Bland, who lectures at BIT, says most of them will be engaged in evangelism, youth work,

THE NEXT BATCH OF YOUNG GRADUATES ARE READY TO ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE OF BUILDING GOD'S KINGDOM IN THAILAND. BUT IT'S GOING TO BE TOUGH, REPORTS

RICHARD WELLS

church planting or church growth

Santi, for example, a young man from the Lahu hill-tribe in northern Thailand, is off to plant a Thai church in western Bangkok where, it is hoped, a rallying point will develop for the many Lahu who move south to work in the city.

He will have the support of Ajarn Shin, a Korean missionary at BIT who has worked in Thailand for more than 30 years. His organisation – World Mission Partners - has started a new church in Bangkok every year for the

past seven years, financed by Korean Christians.

Gittiya and Gittiporn, both from Isan – north-east Thailand – are returning to work on the Cambodian border with a congregation supported by one of Bangkok's larger churches and pastored by one of last year's BIT graduates.

Geoff says: "The Bangkok church want to make a real go of it, so these two young women in their early 20s will be working with him. But if having a team of three workers in one small church seems a luxury, it's an indication of how little church workers here get paid!"

Four young BIT graduates will head south towards the Malaysian border to work among Thai people with Chinese origins, many of whom will be Muslim rather than Buddhist.

Geoff urges prayer for these young Christian workers. "It's daunting and difficult for them," he says. "Most of them will be in lonely situations where they'll quickly miss the spiritual stimulus and fun they've known at BIT."

Those continuing their studies at BIT will now be reflecting on their summer work placements – a foretaste of the rigours of church work and evangelism to come. "Without a doubt, this is strategic work," says Geoff. "This will be of future benefit throughout the land."

• Geoff and Chris Bland (pictured above) both teach at BIT. Geoff specialises on the New Testament and Chris tutors in English.

KUWAIT

Leaders of Christian groups have expressed amazement at the number of conversions to Christ in the wake of former Muslim Robert Hussain's declaration that he had become a Christian. Four more Kuwaitis, using pseudonyms, have told their conversion stories in the Al Hadaf weekly newspaper there. Sources estimate the number of Christians in Kuwait at 150,000 and in the two months following Robert's testimony, a local Christian resource centre sold more than 6.000 New Testaments. (CIN)

VIETNAM

Thirteen protestant prisoners of conscience are being held in the socialist republic, all pastors and evangelists of house churches. They are variously accused of illegal religious activity, resisting arrest or abusing their rights as citizens, and one is known to have been tortured. The arrests concentrated on Vietnam's Quang Ngai province and half those held are from ethnic minorities. In July 10 Christian workers were released from detention after advocacy by Korean church leader Dr Paul Yongi Cho. (CIN)

AUSTRALIA

A memorial fund to train young Third **World Christians for missionary service** has been set up following the death of a 19-year-old student missionary. David McGirr, from Ulster, had just returned from an outreach to Vietnam and Thailand and was surfing south of Perth when he drowned in a strong current. The fund, to which Aus\$20,000 has so far been donated, will set up a Youth With a Mission discipleship training school for candidates from developing countries. (YWAM News)

ZAIRE

Two Russian pilots whose plane was involved in the air crash which killed more than 400 Zairians in January have been jailed for two years, report sources in Kinshasa. A seven million French francs fine has been imposed on two operating companies, Air Africa and Scibe - the aircraft was an Air Africa plane flying under licence to Scibe. The Russian-built Antanatov 32 came down after take-off on to the crowded market of Type Ka.

A group of young Kenyan Christians visited Richmond, Virginia, one of the centres of former slave trade to express their sorrow for the past and leave a message of hope for the future. The 35 teenagers had a challenging message for their hosts: "Forgive us . . . " Spokesman John Kisamwa said: "Africans also played a part in slavery. We sold our brothers to the slave traders." Their message came at the close of a powerful gospel drama performance in the city. (YWAM News)

Growth among the

In the heart of the South American continent lies the Pantanal, the largest swamplands in the world, covering an area almost the size of the UK and occupying a large part of the Brazilian states of Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul, writes Mike Gardiner.

It is one of the world's richest breeding grounds for freshwater fish, and among the beneficiaries of this is an enormous variety of birds which attract ornithologists from across the world.

One of the gateways to this ecological treasure chest is the old city of Pocone, 70 miles to the south of the Mato Grosso capital of Cuiaba, and situated at the northern end of the dusty Transpantaneira, the unsurfaced road which crosses the region.

Pocone, a typical small Brazilian interior city with an economy dominated by cattle ranching and tourism, has a

images of saints and noisy fireworks. But typical of modern Brazil, very few seem to have a living faith in Jesus Christ and only about five per cent are to be found in church - catholic or protestant - on Sundays.

Against this background the Mato Grosso Batpist Convention responded to the Fund for the Future appeal from BMS in 1992 and earmarked Pocone - at that time without a Baptist church - as one of its expansion points in the drive to evangelise the whole state.

The £21,750 project was approved and, thanks to the generosity of those who contributed, BMS promised to pay a pastor's salary for two years. Pastor Cesar Augusto and his wife, Noemia, responded in April 1994 to God's missionary call to leave the comfortable south east of Brazil and take on the challenge of pioneering a new work with

their children, Danielle and Ismael, now eight and four.

At the same time the American Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board agreed to earmark Pocone for a team of volunteers to build a simple

church building.

Now in its third year the Pocone Baptist congregation is showing healthy signs of growth. Hallmarks of this young church are fellowship,



population of 45,000 A large number of Pocone's population participate in the traditional festivals of the Roman Catholic calendar, celebrated with processions,

enthusiastic poor

Hallmarks of this young church are fellowship, love and warmth which draw families in



love and warmth which draw families in. The church has about 30 members but Pastor Cesar says, ruefully, that an equal number have moved away after being baptised chiefly in search of work.

As in most Brazilian churches, building projects are not a matter of bank balances and contractors' estimates, but more... "let's start next Saturday!". And that's just what happened.

One Saturday all the men of the church started digging the foundations of what will be three Sunday school rooms behind the church building, then on Sunday everyone had lunch at the church before the men started work again - joined by several not-yet-converted husbands of the women who prepared the lunch.

While waiting for lunch to be prepared on a little

stove in a lean-to at the back of the church, we joined youngsters in a hilarious Portuguese-English chorus singing session that made us feel so privileged to be representatives of British Christians working in partnership with the poor, but enthusiastic, Baptist believers of rural Brazil.

Prayer points

- Praise the Lord for the fruit that the BMS Fund for the Future is producing in Pocone.
- Pray for Pastor Cesar, who still weeps for the thousands blinded by idolatry and superstition.

Mike and Jean Gardiner serve with the BMS in Cuiaba in theological seminary and church work

Update

Swift aid for tornado victims

Baptist aid workers have been counting the cost of the tornado which wreaked havoc and destruction in Bangladesh in May.

It claimed the lives of 559 and seriously injured 22,000. But its effects were felt by more than 65,000 people living in 69 villages and communities. At the final count, 16,225 homes had been destroyed and another 6,765 badly damaged, while 31 schools had been razed to the ground. Half the ripened crops in the area's paddy fields was destroyed along with 1,561 livestock.

James A Singha, Director of the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha's Social Health and Education Development Board, described the area as a bombsite. "Some of the areas looked as though there had been carpet bombing there," he said. "Dead bodies were strewn over the paddy and football

It was into this devastation that the board speedily distributed emergency relief in league with the local government administrators and

the Bureau of Non Government Organisations. Thanks to a BMS Relief Fund grant of £5,000, a total of 675 families in the Tangail district of the affected area each received a woman's sari, a man's lungi, towelling, a bucket and a hurricane lamp.

"We were able to get emergency and necessary goods to the victims directly," said Mr Singha. "In this way Christians were supported in their faith and witness as well as in the reality of the economic restraints, and the concept of Christian service

was demonstrated to the majority who are not Christians."

Mr Singha was pleased that the name of the Baptist the Sangha's logo.





World mission on the road

TAKE FOUR YOUNG PEOPLE, AN INFLATABLE EARTHBALL, GLOBETROTTER AND BOOMER - AND YOU HAVE THE PERFECT RECIPE FOR WOW ACTION DAYS

Dates for your diary If you are organising a world mission event open to visitors, and would like it publicised in this diary, please let us have details at would like it publicised in this didty, prease let us have details at least three months in advance. Drop us a line at: Diary Dates, World Mission Link, BMS, PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA.

Presidential tour

In October Carolyn Green will be in the London and South East Area, and move to Bristol at the beginning of November
At the Cutting Edge – Celebration of Mission for everyone.

Horsham, West Sussex. Friday 11 October at Haven at Trinity Baptist
Church, Ealing, west London. Saturday 19 October at Trinity Baptist
Church, Bexleyheath, south-east London. Thursday 7 November at
Westbury-on-Trym Baptist Church. move to Bristol at the beginning of November

Nestbury-on-Trym Baptist Church Details: Derek Mucklow 0181 393 6017

Other dates

Hull District Mission Weekend, focus on Zimbabwe, Cottingham Saturday - Sunday 12-13 October

Road Baptist Church.

Details: Brenda Cook 01482 506452

Europe Day (mission focus) at South Parade Baptist Church, Leeds. Sunday 13 October

Details: Anna Appleford 0113 294 5782 West of Scotland Women's Missionary Fellowship, monthly meeting, Monday 14 October

St Stephen's Church Centre, Glasgow. Details: Ann Durning 0141 641 6248

Norfolk District Support Group Autumn Rally at Norwich.

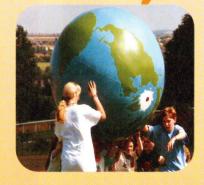
Detaile: Raumond Louis 01603 743666

Details: Raymond Lewis 01603 743685 BU of Scotland Annual Assembly: Missionary Tea on 22 October, Mission BU OF SCOTIAND ANNUAL ASSEMBLY: MISSIONARY LEA ON 42 UCTODER, MISSION EVENING 23 October. Guests include retiring BMS General Director Reg Harvey Tuesday - Thursday 22-24 October

and incoming General Director Alistair Brown.

On the Internet a BMS/HM day conference exploring our commitment to mission worldwide at Braintree Baptist Church, Essex. Saturday 26 October Details: Jim Clarke 01353 778984

World Mission for Churches



WOW! It's manic action

Two cars, six people and an impressive collection of electrical equipment and costumes – not to mention an array of sunglasses - and the WOW Action Days hit the road with a vengeance.

Working with the BMS is obviously addictive because the team was made up almost entirely of ex-28:19 Action

Team members, called out of their respective relaxing summers by BMS Youth and Children's Co-ordinator Phil Marsden to take the manic programme to all parts of the UK to excite and exhaust hundreds of children.

From doing the conga, to writing to missionaries, from sketches with shaving foam and clowns to Pingu videos. . . and a giant inflatable earthball, the children joined in everything. Get a child of five or six face to face with the truth of Jesus Christ and the uncompromising gospel and they want to be involved.

The programme ran from 10am to 4pm in eight locations around the country - a morning roadshow, packed lunch, an afternoon of activities and a challenge to everyone.

And the reward for the team? The glowing smile on the face of a small girl when she was told that SHE was a missionary in her own school.



Inspiration, motivation, ideas, news on world mission for churches...

Vission Link

LEFT: WOW action with the giant inflatable Earthball.

BELOW LEFT: Eltham Park - a French welcome for BMS missionaries. **BELOW RIGHT: Puzzling challenge at the** Cambridgeshire open garden.

Active welcome

John and Sue Wilson and their family received a mission welcome with a French flavour when they visited their link church at Eltham Park, south east London – it was the church's world mission event.

It was a day for revolutionary active participation with an It's a Knockout challenge, model painting, an art group and the release of dozens of red, white and blue balloons.

The weekend event coincided with Bastille Day celebrations and co-ordinator Shirley McWilliam said that as John and Sue serve with the BMS in Morsang, France, it was too good an opportunity to miss. "We were also able to add, as we'd hoped, £150 to the BMS fund," she said.

Open air aid for BMS

For the third successive vear two Cambridgeshire gardens were opened to the public during the summer raising more than £700 for the BMS.

With support from the Cambridgeshire **Baptist Missionary** Fellowship, Kay and Keith Rawlinson opened their garden gates in Willingham, near Cambridge, to visitors. And in Great Shelford the garden of Gwen and Hugh Oliver became a hive of activity with games and competitions for families.

The sale of cakes, jams, plants, books, lunches and refreshments swelled funds, and the open gardens allowed 40 churches to take part.

Reinforcing the links

Havdn Davies is a seasoned visitor to Albania he has made five eventful

Dear Audrey...

Q: We're doing a series in church at the moment; we'd like a BMS mission speaker but we don't think we can fit one into the schedule. Can you help? A: This is not a problem. Here are a few ideas:

 Let the mission speaker or missionary see details of the series you're following – he or she will be able to bring a different dimension to what you're doing.

 Get the Junior Church or young people's leaders to talk to a BMS missionary or mission speaker about what the youngsters are doing. The speaker may well be able to build on it for what they want to say about the work they have been doing.

 Change your programme! After all, world mission is all about changing things!

PS: Mission speakers are in great demand at harvest time for messages from the developing world. But what about other times of the year, like Lent, or Advent, Palm Sunday or Mothering Sunday, or Pentecost? They may be just the opportunity your church needs to get them really

trips there, two while the country was still in the grip of communist dictator

Enver Hoxha.

When he arrived this time he was left without any clothes but those he was wearing. BMS missionaries Roger and Nikki Pearce came to his rescue and lent him some while his luggage caught a later connection from Vienna.

Haydn, who has pastoral charge of Maesyyrhelem, Pound, Penithon and Gravel Baptist churches near his home in Llanbadarn Fynydd, Wales, was in Albania to visit his churches' link missionaries, Roger and Nikki, and nine-month-old son, Jamie.

While in the capital of Tirana, Haydn attended the Baptist church, where Roger was able to translate the sermon, and another evangelical church. He also accompanied the Baptist church on an outing to the beach at Durres.

Havdn is keen on strong links with missionaries. "I'd encourage churches with mission links not only to write to their missionaries but to send someone to visit," he says.



FRED AND ELLA PREECE SEEMED TO HAVE THE GOLDEN TOUCH. – UNTIL GOD BROKE INTO THEIR LIVES. THEN THEY FOUND A GREATER TREASURE, AS HEALINGS AND CHANGED LIVES FOLLOWED THEM AROUND . . . GARY PRITCHARD REPORTS

mprobable

ith their breathless tales of God's goodness, and eyes wide with anticipation of their next divine appointment, they reveal an excitement typical of young missionaries returning from their first assignment.

But Fred Preece has just celebrated his 90th birthday.

He and his wife, Ella, have been sharing the good news of Jesus for the past 25 years. While most couples their age have settled neatly into their retirement plans, Fred and Ella have broken the mould. They jostle to tell the next story of God's wonderful grace, and exude enough energy to wear out someone a quarter of their age.

But it wasn't always so, as Ella remembered the early days.

"After the death of my mother, and then my sister - horribly with cancer -I got very depressed and had an overwhelming fear of death," she says.

That desperate time in Ella's life was masked from those who knew her. For on the surface at least, the newlyweds had been enjoying a prosperous lifestyle. Fred was an entrepreneur. His

seemingly golden touch left its mark on everything he put his hand to - becoming a

professional footballer, cycling champion and confident businessman. Fred painted a picture of enviable success.

"We lived life just for ourselves," Ella admitted. "We had everything comfortable home, plenty of money and the rest. But I was desperate. We even came close to parting at that time."

The turning point came in the summer of 1972. Fred and Ella were out exercising their dogs, when they stumbled across an unusual sight - a huge tent and a bustling, excited crowd.

Ella takes up the story again: "I saw the sign over the door of the tent - Way to Life. I just wondered if there could be any hope for me. I asked what it was all about, and I was told it was the last weekend of a crusade."

Much to Ella's astonishment, Fred agreed to accompany her the next night. They became so bowled over by God's reality, they responded to the gospel appeal.

The change was as dramatic as it was immediate.

Fred had a business meeting on the Monday morning.

"I had an appointment with an important client over a new business contract," he says. "I

found myself telling him everything that happened.. I think this man was so astonished, he gave me the deal - but he kept shaking his head in disbelief."

Life would never be the same again for the couple, as God began to use them in a remarkable way. "Fred says I was like a bull in a china shop around that time," Ella recalls. "But all my life I'd been without hope – and I was just desperate in case I might lose what I'd found in Christ."

They started holding Friday night gospel meetings in their home, with up to 50 people crammed into the living room. "It was amazing really," says Fred. "The word went around and people just turned up."

Many people found faith at those house meetings and there were stories of healing and release. But that was just the start of God's training for them. There were even greater adventures ahead.

Fred and Ella struck up a friendship with the Revd Alex Stein. That would prove to be a fruitful partnership, as the couple travelled the world with Stein's mission organisation. In their 70s at the time, they found God to be faithful whether it

PICTURES: HULTON DEUTSCH LIBRARY





going under the knife.

After reassuring her, Ella was able to share her faith. "This terrified woman spoke of the overwhelming peace she felt as she was taken to the theatre the next day," says Ella. "This lovely lady went on to know Jesus for herself, along with her husband, and we became good friends."

Fred and Ella continued to gossip about Jesus wherever they found themselves welcomed, and were still travelling the world regularly as recently as 1992. Fred joyfully recalled a favourite story of a special week of mission in his home town of Manchester.

"We'd been knocking on doors and were finding it pretty tough going," he vocabulary is "retirement". Fred still answers regular requests for preaching around the country, and continues to see God move through his ministry. "Even recently I've seen God perform a wonderful healing to a woman with cancer in my local church," he says.

The couple seem to take the saying "living life to the full" as if it was written just for them. Devoted to each other, as much as to God, they see each day at their Herefordshire home as another opportunity to serve their Saviour.

"We have a lovely daily routine," says Ella. "We start our day in the scriptures and then work our way through our prayer list." They see it as a privilege to be able to live for Jesus.

"We'll never retire as long as we can continue to serve his purpose for our lives," says Fred.
"Material things don't matter any more. We're more concerned with helping people who have problems of their own — and our home is always open for those who want to come in and talk.

"You'd never think that anyone could change their way of life as we have done." •

Gary Pritchard is a freelance journalist

based in South Wales. He is



was in their living room, or thousands of miles away on the other side of the world.

One of Fred's more outstanding memories was of a mission trip to Australia. "I'd led a 14-year-old boy to the Lord that day, and had taken him home to tell his mum the good news," he recalls. "She was a godly lady confined to a wheelchair with a crippling disease. As I went to leave their house, God told me to pray for her.

"With great nervousness I laid my hands upon her and the Lord completely healed her. To the astonishment of the medical staff, she walked into the hospital for her next appointment where they confirmed the 'unexplainable' healing."

On another occasion, while Ella was in hospital awaiting a major operation, she found herself in a bed next to a woman who was petrified with fear

of the thought of



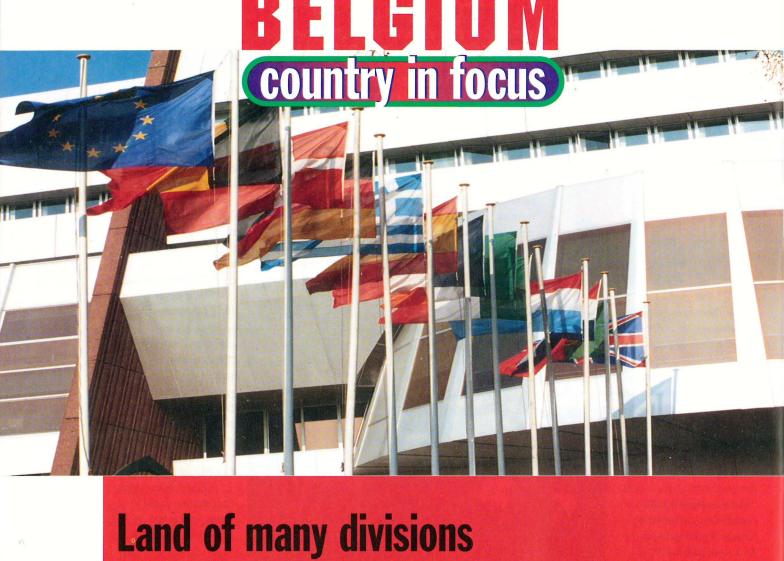
says. "At one house I found myself sharing my faith with a couple who were very receptive. But each time I got started, one of their children would come in and so I'd start again.

"Eventually after several re-starts, I led all five of that family to Jesus. I can't tell you the joy that brought us."

The one word that doesn't seem to enter the Preeces'

currently undertaking a media studies course.





Focus for the nations of Europe: Belgium has become one of the three Euro parliament centres

As the second most densely populated country in Europe, Belgium is a land of many divisions. There is first of all the division of language. Flemish speakers (a Dutch dialect) make up 55% of the population whereas Walloons a little over half of that figure, at 32%.

Geography coincides with the language division. Flemish is spoken in the north and west, whereas French is the main language in the south and east. Brussels is bilingual.

There is also a natural dividing line, that of the River Meuse, dividing the land into uplands, coastlands and the Meuse valley which is the industrial centre of Belgium.

These divisions are the stuff of geography text books, and that is where they have to stay because for the last

160 years the Belgians themselves have been opposing these divisions. In 1970 a law was introduced that divided the country into four. Today there are 10 Belgian provinces comprising five Flemish provinces in the north and five French in the south.

The capital Brussels is also the capital of the European Community and the headquarters of NATO.

Nominally most people are Christians, with the vast majority showing allegiance to the Roman Catholic faith. About 600 Reformed churches had been founded following the Reformation, but many of these were destroyed in the Spanish Inquisition. Today there are fewer than 200 reformed churches. Protestants make up less than 1% of the

population, and churches such as Baptist churches have a hard time as they are perceived as being no different to sects. People are therefore wary of them and their teaching. •

Fact

Former USA President Jimmy Carter wrote a personal letter to the Belgian government asking that Baptists be no longer treated as a sect, but be allowed their full rights as guaranteed by the constitution.

A politician on Belgian TV said they planned to stop all religious groups and sects from functioning in Belgium.

Facts and figures Belgium

Area: 33,100 sq km

Capital: Brussels pop. 1,100,000 Population: 10,020,000 (1994) Annual population growth: 0.08%

Children per woman: 1.6

People groups: Flemish 55%, Walloon 32%, Other foreign 7%, EC citizens 6%

Religion: Christian 89% (of which Roman Catholic 87%, Protestant 1%, others eg Orthodox, Marginal 1%), Non-religious 7%, Muslim 3%, Others 1%.

Languages: Official languages are Flemish, French and German

Literacy: 98%

Health: One doctor for every 310 people Under five mortality: 10 per 1000 (1991)





Baptist Churches in **Belgium**

Key to map showing locations of Baptist churches

- Peruweltz (French)

- Peruwettz (French)
 Ougree (French)
 Grâce-Hologne (French)
 Liege (French)
 Glain (French)
 Malmedy (French)
 Wezembeek-Oppem
 (International) (International)
- Laeken (French) Jurbise (International)
- 10 Jurbise (French) 11 Mont-sur-Marchienne
- (French) 12 Jemeppe (French)
- 13 Aywaille-Remouchamps

- (French) 14 Middelkerke (Dutch/French/English)
- 15 Anvers/Antwerper (International)
- 16 Morlanwelz (French) 17 Uccle (French)

- 17 occie (Telich)
 18 St Gilles (Spanish)
 19 Haine St Pierre (French)
 20 Bornem (Dutch)
- 20 Bornem (Dutch) 21 Dottignies (French)
- Melle (Dutch)
- 23 Grâce-Hologne (Italian) 24 Evere (French)
- 25 Waterloo (English)



So near and yet so far

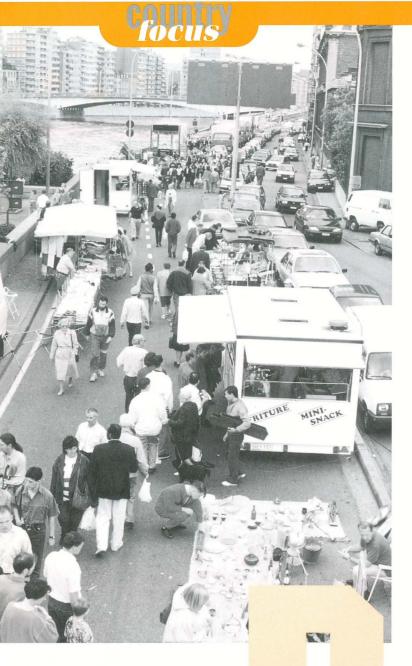
The Kingdom of Belgium is perhaps one of the least popular places in Europe to visit. Many people pass through it on their way to somewhere else, without giving it a second glance. Yet it is one of the UK's nearest neighbours, only 65 miles from Britain. It is a small country of around 10 million inhabitants.

Although they do not live far away, Britons tend to know little about these neighbours. The key to understanding Belgians probably lies in their strong respect for the Catholic church, although this is now faltering. The country is 89% "Christian" of which 87% is Roman Catholic. However, only 30% of the population claims to practise their religion.

Even for those who do not attend church and even claim not to believe in God, it is wise not to criticise the Church or the Pope! There is a deep distrust of protestants and especially Evangelicals. Baptists are classed with Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons.







OUOTE

"Being a Baptist **Christian in Belgium** today means being a person full of expectation of what God will be doing next, full of dreams for the future. We enjoy the positive changes in our Union, in our churches. We are sure God will continue to add new members to our churches as long as we stay faithful and we enjoy particularly the fact that most of the new Christians are young people."

Ria Deneut, President of the Women's department, Belgian **Baptist Union**

seven years. I was really sincere and I loved God with all my heart. I followed the teachings, but I had problems in remembering biblical passages. They forced me to do door-to-door work, but they were too strict with me.

One day a Christian woman of Morlanwelz Baptist Church invited me to a meeting and I went, thinking to myself, "too bad for the Jehovahs."

I was really seeking the truth. When I entered the church, I really felt that God was present, a gentle warmth, a peaceful atmosphere. I was amazed to see young people sitting next to older ones. After a few meetings, I understood that I had to give my heart to the Lord, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the Saviour.

Today, I find it difficult to pray, but I feel that God is with me, and that he helps me day by day. I believe I have eternal life and I am happy."

A former 28:19 Action Team working in Belgium were doing door-todoor evangelistic work. They found it hard work, but did have some encouragements, like this man.

"One elderly man told us that when he was young, he fell in love with a woman who was a Jehovah's Witness. In order to marry her, he had to become one, too. He never really understood their beliefs, however. Now his wife has died and he has abandoned his contacts with the JWs. He was pleased to share his confusion with us and to talk about his search for truth. He has asked for a pastoral visit to talk more."

Helen Matthews

So far!

Here are two illustrations of le difference from Joyce and Stuart Filby who are BMS missionaries in Belgium.

1: Joyce and Stuart met a young man at a youth camp in Belgium. His father had died of cancer the week before, aged only 39. He had become a Christian a few months previously. His wife found the whole situation confusing but appreciated the love shown from people at the church. However, the man's mother had openly declared that her son's death was a punishment from God for joining the Baptist 'sect'. She said that worse would follow for the rest of the family unless they repented. She said that the Baptist church was 'the very seat of Satan.'

2: Belgians do not appear to have the same attitude to Christmas as we do in Britain. The Filbys' postman was intrigued at the number of Christmas cards they received. "We were able not only to share about God giving Jesus at Christmas but that outside Belgium there are many folk prepared to be our friends even though the Belgians believe we belong to a small sect."

So near!

This is the testimony of Yvonne D'Hollander, aged 63 and a member of Morlanwelz Baptist Church.

"I have always lived in Morlanwelz, and I think I have always believed.

I was visited in 1983 by the Jehovah's Witnesses, and I followed them. I attended their meetings for

QUOTE

"I can say, after having helped my husband in his ministry in Zaire, that Belgium is a much more difficult field to work in."

Gilberte Rivez, wife of Daniel Brennet, pastor at Morlanwelz Baptist Church.



Sunday market at Liege

Epistle from Middlekerke

rom the saints at
Middlekerke Baptist
Church, to the sisters and
brothers in Great Britain,
greetings!

I, Samuel Verhaege, with my wife, Annick, and our children Rebekka, Ruth, Sarah and David, bring you our love in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As pastor of this church I bring you our joys and trials for your prayers.

"We are not a cult nor are we part of the 'New Religion' movement. We are simply people who believe in Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures . . . "

This is how we began our leaflet which was given to homes in our district. We have to try to explain what a Baptist is, because most people in Belgium are so suspicious of us.

Most of our members are French-speaking Belgians, but we do have others amongst us. We have one Romanian family, a couple who have both found work. We helped them with their papers. We do have some political

refugees from Romania in our country, but they are not usually officially recognised as such.

We took two lorries full of Bibles and toys for the children to Romania. In the orphanage we found four boys sleeping in one bed. We were just like Father Christmas to them, giving out toys. However, we heard that when we left the securitate took the toys and sold them on the black market.

We have tried to help the refugees in our community. We had 40 all together and bought them Bibles. They came to our church about six Sundays.

There are four African converts in our church, from Rwanda, Togo, and Zaire. There are several Zairians living in Ougree, a suburb of Liege. They are able to go to the Baptist church in Ougree on a Sunday and receive a packet of food to last them the week. They call this the 'food bank'. The church has one room converted into a

grocery store.

At Middlekerke, we have a lot of refugees passing through the church and we try to help where we can. Gabriel is one of them. He is quite a young boy.

Then there is Matthieu. As he spoke French, it was too difficult for him to stay in Flanders so we transferred him to Liege so that he could continue his studies. The Baptist church there gave him an apartment in the building. The organisation Carpenters for Christ from the USA renovated it for him, installing central heating.

We try to deal with each

situation as it arises.

There is a big problem of drug addiction in Flanders. Our vision is for a home here to help those addicted to drugs and alcohol.

There is no Christian place like that in Belgium – I have sent several people to Holland. People need a very strong will to go there, as it's a long way from home.

The problem begins in school. Sometimes drugs are put into chewing gum and so the whole school is affected.

> In many ways Ostend has the same problems as London or Amsterdam.

We have a deaf and dumb person in our church. He has been with us for 10 years. Like all our members, he needs

time. It takes time to show people that you love them and to give them a chance to grow.

Many Belgians tend to be rather hard and materialistic. However, the saints here are very generous. Church members give more than a tenth of their income to the work here. Also there are many special gifts, for Romania and for needs within our community.

We had to buy our church building. Here in Belgium Baptists are regarded as a cult and have difficulty renting a building; so, if we are allowed to rent one and them make improvements, then we are thrown out.

Because we bought the building, the people cannot afford to pay a pastor as well. We support youth work in Belgium, which we see as very important. We give to the Union and home mission too. With only 33 members, what more can we do?

There is so much to be done in the Baptist church in Belgium. We long to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, amongst people whose hearts are hardened to the gospel.

It's a long, hard job. When the pastors are working hard to earn a living, they do not have the time and energy to motivate the other church members.

With love from your brothers and

Please help us. We are your neighbours.

sisters in Christ, not far away.

Sammy Verhaege: Baptists are not a cult

Day to day transport in Ostend



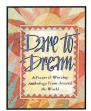


ook-reviews

Dare to Dream

a prayer and worship anthology from around the world Edited by Geoffrey Duncan

Fount £7.99



In a world filled with poverty, oppression and discrimination, our hopes and dreams of a better future can, at times, seem impossible to fulfil. This anthology, compiled by the Council for World Mission, not only helps to keep dreams alive, it stimulates appropriate action.

Material is drawn from a rich variety of Christian experience around the world. A selection of prayers, litanies, poetry and readings draws world issues into sharp focus. Again and again one's conscience and emotions are stirred. They bring you face to face with world forces that diminish people and thwart God's purposes.

Designed for worship and prayer, both public and personal, here is an excellent source book for ministers and worship leaders who want to keep alert to the world and its needs. Regular use will broaden horizons and deepen understanding. I have found it helpful in personal devotion as a stimulus to prayer and action.

There are five sections. First, concerning creation and environment. Next, issues of poverty and pain, followed by those that affect women and children. Then, community dreams and nightmares are explored leading, finally, to protest, action and dreams fulfilled.

As the cover says: "Dare to Dream will inspire you to do just that; to keep your dreams of a better world alive." I would add: "With Jesus as your inspiration and his Spirit as your resource, it will challenge you to begin to turn dreams into reality."

Peter Tongeman

So I Send You

a study guide for Mission by Roger Brown SPCK £8.99

There is a freshness in approach to this study guide to mission which makes it very readable, informative and challenging. Each

chapter opens up a subject in a clear way using stories and case studies to help the reader. There are suggestions for study and questions on applying the material to the crosscultural world in which we live.

The author selects certain key themes from the Bible with many a telling phrase to shed new light, and then

distils the major themes of modern cross-cultural mission. Thoughts from a wide range of writers are skilfully interwoven into the book.

The different themes of the Church Growth Movement, African Indigenous Churches, Liberation Theology, Signs and Wonders, Urban Mission and Inter Faith Encounter are all helpfully summarised. The author does not avoid the painful questions arising from the genocide in Rwanda where there had been revival in earlier years.

I warmly commend this book to all who want to learn more of how God sends and uses his people to do his work in the world. It is excellent for use by individuals or groups.

• Roger Bowen is newly appointed General Secretary of Crosslinks, formerly tutor in mission at St John's College Nottingham.

Derek Rumbol

Tinker, Taylor, Missionary

Michael Griffiths 1992 222pp

IVP £3.95

It is not that just over a year into retirement I hear the call to missionary service, but rather that the title of Michael Griffiths book caught my attention. The chapter headings take up the theme of the popular rhyme to reflect on such things as the personal cost of missionary work, training, family issues, relationships in another culture, and whether or not it is a life-long calling. The final chapter highlights the role of the church in encouraging members to go rather than individuals always waiting for a personal call.

However, it was not just a fascinating read. I was able to look back over my years in ministry and mission support remembering how we had coped (and sometimes not coped!) as a family. I reflected on what I knew of friends and colleagues who had been drawn by God into cross-cultural mission. Michael's book struck many chords, offered sound common sense, and certainly did not dodge the tricky issues.

God may have a different ministry for me at this stage of my life, but here are principles I would have been glad to read in the 1950s when I was considering ministry and mission as a young man. The book's subtitle "Options in a changing world" reminds us that there are plenty of opportunities for new areas of work in our lives if only we will give the Lord

authority to implement changes that will make our discipleship of worth in the Kingdom.



It is not only the book but the rhyme also which puts the challenge: Tinker, tailor... this year, next year, sometime, never?

Leslie Gregory

Who won the '94 World Cup?

by Alex Ribeiro (ex-Formula One driver)
Rivers International (paperback) £6.99

When this book came in to the office for review, I pounced on it in true Seaman-style being both a football and Formula One enthusiast.



It's coming home, it's coming home, it's . . . I couldn't wait for the working day to finish to read what World Cup '94 was all about. And boy, was I surprised!

This book is not a dull, dry, documentary like the '94 World Cup final between Brazil and Italy turned out to be. The tension, the drama, the penalty shoot out, the humour . . .

"Everybody began to swear. First they cursed the referee, then the referee's mother, the coach . . . "

It could be England in Euro 96!

The author, ex-Formula One driver Alex Ribeiro who acted as pastor to the Brazilian team, gives the reader an informed backdrop to this spectacular World Cup year – a black year for Formula One when Ayrton Senna died tragically on track and Brazil mourned their national hero for 10 days.

"For those like Ayrton, who have had an encounter with Christ, death is not the end but only the starting flag for eternal life."

There are great pix too (yes, it is only a paperback); eight glossy, colour shots of the Brazilian side in action. Six Christian footballers in the Brazilian squad were not simply acting out their mission impossible. This was going to be World Mission on a grand scale.

Do you remember seeing – along with 2,500 million others; half the world's population – the entire Brazilian team in a circle after the match and wondering what on earth they were doing?

"They were praising and thanking the name of God." Powerful stuff.

And though this book has none of the Euro or American hype that we are used to before any great sporting event, it deserves the attention of not only the Christian as a golden goal for faith, but also the non-Christian as a means of beginning to hear about God through their love of football.

Diane Hayward

LE TT ER S

I read with interest your article about giving responsibility to youth (mh July/August 1996). I once was young. Now I am 73.

I was, and am still, in the process of retiring from a number of Christian and small public services. Not that I intend to do nothing but I felt that the time had come to give younger people the opportunity to take on responsibilities.

I was 16 when World War II began and I went to work in the office of a business which was on war work. At the age of 18 I became assistant to the accountant but when I reached call-up age for women I was deferred annually until the war ended. It was responsible work.

In my spare time I worked in Civil Defence. I trained as a lecturer in fire fighting and prevention of fire spread with 10 men and one other lady. It was a rigorous course, and only two of us qualified — myself and an older man.

Lecturing stopped when V-1s began. I became one of our three Post Leaders. At most I was 21. When the V-2s started, more girls were called up for part-time Civil Defence and, as the lady with experience, I was put in charge of three teams of three ladies to man the post three nights a week.

And I've had responsibilities ever since the war ended.

There were thousands of young people who held responsible posts during the war.

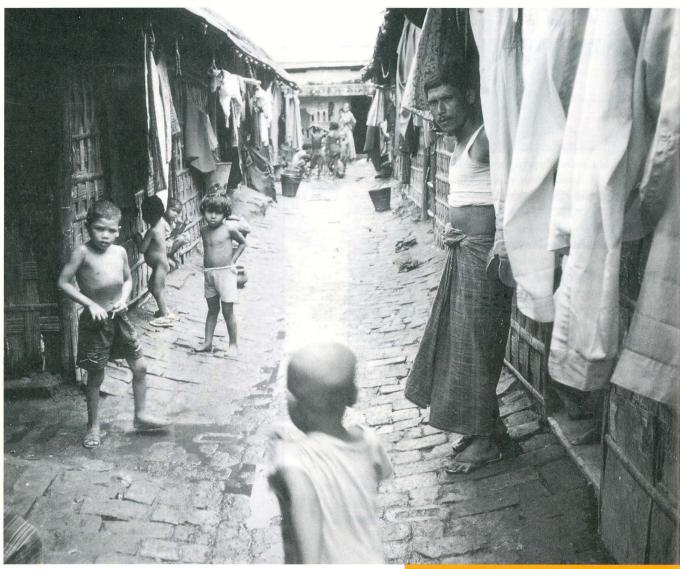
Two of my young friends received medals for bravery; one of these was a posthumous award.

Young people can do.

Connie Holland Holland-on-Sea







The problem of getting into debt

Many countries are experiencing a growing trade deficit, the result of a growth in imports surpassing a much more modest increase in exports. Home grown raw materials like wood, grain, meat, and minerals are exported, which leaves the natural resources looted irrecoverably. The table opposite gives an idea of the amount of external debt incurred by certain countries.



Country	Total external debt (millions)	External debt per capita 1992	
Brazil	121,110	787	
Mexico	113,378	1334	
Indonesia	84,385	458	
Russia	78,658	528	
India	76,983	87	
China	69,321	60	
Argentina	67,569	2041	
Thailand	39,424	680	
Portugal	32,046	3270	
Hungary	21,900	2126	
Bangladesh	13,189	115	
Nicaragua	11,126	2853	
Zaire	10,344	244	
Panama	6,505	2602	
Congo	4,751	1980	
Jamaica	4,303	1793	
Zimbabwe	4,007	385	
El Salvador	2,131	395	
Nepal	1,797	90	

ARIES

Average earnings

Country pe	Annual earnings er person in US dollars	Percentage of average American's earnings
Afghanistan	\$230	1.1%
Angola	\$620	3%
Argentina	\$2128	10%
Bangladesh	\$180	0.85%
Belgium	\$14,880	71%
Brazil	\$2550	12.1%
Bulgaria	\$5300	25%
Cameroon	\$1010	5%
Canada	\$19.020	90%
CAR	\$760	3.6%
El Salvador	\$1040	4.9%
France	\$17,830	85%
Haiti	\$400	1.9%
India	\$350	1.6%
Indonesia	\$490	2.3%
Italy	\$15,150	72%
Jamaica	\$1080	5%
Japan	\$23,730	116%
Moldova	\$3600	13%
Nepal	\$170	0.9%
Portugal	\$4260	20%
Sierra Leone	\$200	1%
Sri Lanka	\$470	2.1%
Thailand	\$1170	5.5%
UK	\$14,570	69%
Zaire	\$260	1.2%
Zimbabwe	\$640	3%

What a fiver will buy

We chose two African countries - Zaire and Cameroon - and asked missionaries what the equivalent of £5 would buy.

Cameroon

10 large bottles of Guinness.

Half an academic school year's fees (village school).

Coach ticket to travel about 400 miles.

Five pairs of shoes.

25 pairs of flip-flops.

50 pineapples.

More bananas than you'd care to count...

Three months' electricity for a typical house with only lights and no fridge. 40 postage stamps (or 10 overseas stamps).

Three gallons of petrol – possibly with added water.

Five kilograms of fillet steak.

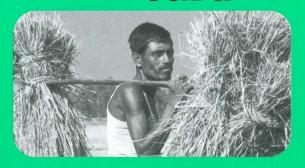
15 Bibles (cheapest style). Two sacks of cement.

400 doughnuts - without jam.

50 taxi journeys of up to 10 miles



ACTION



LIVING ON THE EDGE

The theme for One World Week becomes more intriguing and provocative each year. For 1996 we have Living on the Edge which conjures up extreme vulnerability (on the margins) and considerable excitement (at the cutting edge). Both of these were evident when television reporters descended on a Baptist church in east London in March 1994. One of that church's elders, Sunday Ogunwobi, had taken sanctuary there when threatened with deportation after 13 years, living quite openly and happily in London. The technology of the broadcasters contrasted with the plight of that family, living on the

A change in legislation put the Ogunwobis in the "illegal overstayer" category and, despite approaches by MPs, churches, other sects and well-known figures, the Home Office will still not concede their right to stay in what is now their home country.

This is the longest running sanctuary known in Britain. It is planned to hold the national one World Week service at the church as a sign of solidarity.

You could use a card this month to order One World Week material. OWW, PO Box 100, LONDON, SE1, but much better to send it to The Ogunwobi Family Campaign, Hackney Downs Baptist Church, LONDON, E5 8DS, with a word of encouragement, or to the Home Office, Queen Anne's Gate, LONDON, SW1H 9AT, with a word of protest. Or you could do all three.

Zaire

Breakfast for 20 people of one bread roll, one portion of uncooked peanuts, one mug of tea.

Two small chickens.

One large fresh fish, enough for three portions.

A meal for six people made of frozen fish, fufu flour, maize flour, tomato paste. onion, garlic, beans, bananas.

15 lined exercise books, 15 squared exercise books, 15 pens.

One litre of cheap ice cream. Five Mars bars.

IT MAY HAVE TAKEN A LOT OF COURAGE TO STEP OUT ON THE STREETS OF CALCUTTA BUT THE BMS 28:19 ASIA ACTION TEAM FOUND GOD AT WORK



he thought of spending three months in Calcutta was frightening. It was several days before we felt ready to brave the cluttered streets. But on that very afternoon, unintentionally, we ended up in the company of Mother

After a short acquaintance she asked us what kind of work we'd come to do for her, so we quickly put her straight by explaining we were working for her friend at Emmanuel Ministries (EM) a few houses along the road.

Mother Teresa encouraged us with the verse from Matthew 25:40: "I tell you the truth whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine you did for me."

We went on our way quite bewildered and amazed by her humility.

The first three months were spent working at two different projects for street and slum children. Sarah, John and Sarah were at the EM Pavement Club which provided around 80 children with informal education, medical care, food and a

place to wash both themselves and their clothes. It was a secure place for the children to get away from the daily pressures of survival for awhile.

Nigel and Jo were at EM's New Market project provided for the children from one of the main slum areas in Calcutta. It also provided basic education and food for around 80 children.

We spent the majority of our time at these schools, trying to develop new and creative ways of teaching often making a spectacle of ourselves at the same time.

Calcutta is considered the third largest city in the world with the lowest urban standard of living. Its population is equivalent to roughly a quarter of that in Britain alone. The city is named after the Hindu deity

Kali, the goddess of destruction. Hinduism is the dominant religion, followed by Islam, and Bengali is the main language. It is the area where William Carey, the founder of the Baptist Missionary Society began his mission in India over 200 years ago.

Out of 14 million in the city, 4.5 million live in squalid slums, and one million on the streets. More than 2,000 immigrants come into the city every day with the hope of a better existence.

Knowing of Calcutta's clutter and noise could make it the last place on earth that you would want to visit, but after spending three months there, we were able to discover a lot more than the



average tourist.

Underneath the dust and rubble is a fascinating and beautifully intricate city. With its vibrant colours, its potent spices and great sense of community, it is a rich place to be and it was a privilege to be able to experience life there.

We were able to experience God at work, especially within the organisation for which we were working - Emmanuel Ministries. From a home counselling agency nearly 25 years ago, it has grown into a network of projects reaching out to the neglected and abused members of society.

Life in Sri Lanka was a different story. The first thing we appreciated was cleaner air and open space

that we'd missed in Calcutta.

We spent three months moving around the island working at different Baptist churches. We assisted pastors with the churches' weekly events leading Bible studies, prayer meetings, organising children's events, taking part in services, Sunday schools and house visiting.

The island consists of two main people groups. The Singhalese represent nearly three quarters of the population and are mainly Buddhist. The Tamils are the second largest race and are mainly Hindu. For many years there has been fighting between the two groups but it is only a minority of people causing the unrest. Nearly three quarters of the population live in rural areas, many cooking on open fires

and drawing water from wells. The poverty is less obvious than in Calcutta.

It was a busy time for us packing up so frequently and moving on to the next destination. We prayed a lot about settling in quickly and adjusting to the many new locations we visited. God did answer our prayers about this. The more we travelled from place to place, the more we learned about entering a new situation and how we could be most effective in the short space of time we had there.

Throughout our time abroad we were all faced with new challenges from God. We were led to depend on him in ways that we'd never done before. This dependency, often accompanied by fear drew us closer to God. It enabled us

to experience him within our lives in ways we'd never known before.

As a team we believe God has truly blessed us. We are certain that our time abroad has been beneficial to each of us in many different ways. Our experiences are of great worth and value which we feel will stay with us and continue to help us in our daily Christian lives.

The BMS 28:19 India/Sri Lanka Action Team — Jo Pillinger, Sarah Barker, Nigel Cope, John Condie and Sarah Brown.



prayerfocus

A regular update from BMS colleagues around the world compiled by Sam Gibson

Americas



BRAZIL

Keith has now officially ended his teaching ministry at Parana Baptist Seminary. He has worked at the seminary for nine years and held the posts of Dean and Head of the Old Testament department.

He is sad to be leaving the seminary but pleased that it is now fully run by Brazilian people.

The student body of the seminary has nearly doubled in number over the past two years and the future looks very bright.

Keith and Barbara were given a wonderful farewell service by their friends and colleagues, at which quite a few tears were shed.

They have also been ministering at Piraquara Baptist Church, a fellowship with many problems but one which is stronger and healthier now than it has

been in the past.

A group which separated from the main church has now begun a work in one of the poorer suburbs of the town and the main church is seeking God's guidance for its future.

Keith and Barbara returned to the UK on Home Assignment recently. Their term of service in Brazil is now complete and in January 1997 they will begin a new ministry in Portugal in the Lisbon area. There they will be pastoring a church and teaching Old Testament at the seminary in Queluz.

Please pray:

- for the new leaders as they settle in at Parana Baptist Seminary.
- for Piraquara Baptist Church, that they would find the right person to head up the fellowship and that God would show them clearly his will for the way ahead.
- for a refreshing Home Assignment.
- for Keith and Barbara as they prepare for a new ministry in a new country. It has been a big wrench for them to leave Brazil.



Ian and Pauline Thomas

At the beginning of August, Ian and Pauline spent a week in Provence with Open Air Campaigners brushing up on their sketch board skills. The week was all practical with the main focus being the Avignon Festival. It was the ideal context for street work, passers-by were relaxed and happy to stop, watch and listen. Some remained behind for a chat after the presentations. It's an area with great potential.

Please pray:

 for the future as Ian and Pauline may be moving on from Carcassonne; pray for guidance as they seek God's will.

EFFECTIVE PRAYER SUPPORT

BMS personnel around the world often testify to the effects of prayer in their work. They appreciate the support of Christians who remember them regularly. Use this section of **m**h individually or in a group as fuel for your prayer support for BMS missionaries, volunteers, Action Teams and home staff.

If you would like to pray more specifically and personally, please ask about the BMS missionaries' prayer letter service. Telephone Diane Hayward on 01235 512077.

Worldwide



After five weeks of intensive training, the 28 members of the seven Action Teams fly to their destinations on October 13/14. This is the most extensive BMS 28:19 Action Team line-up in the programme's six-year history - more countries and more young people than ever before. And they are bound for . . .

ZIMBABWE: Alex

Jones (18), from Didcot, Oxfordshire, Fiona James (21), from the Isle of Wight, David Cobby (21), from Longhope, Gloucestershire, and Emma Boswell (18), from Braintree. Essex. They will be working throughout the National Baptist Convention area, visiting and praying with families, speaking at services and participating in the general life of the churches.

NEPAL: Chris Peacock (18) from Torquay in Devon, Helen Schwier (18) from Huntingdon, Edward Dix (18) from Penarth, South Glamorgan, and Emma Ryan (18) from the Isle of Tiree, Scotland. They will work with BMS missionaries Tim and Caroline Trimble involved in singing and playing in churches and youth groups, setting up a village school library, teaching English, helping at homes for mentally handicapped children and teaching guitar and keyboard.

JAMAICA: Stephen Thomson (20) from Aberdeen, Jo Chidgey (22) from Worcester, Matt Swan (21) from Lytham St Annes in Lancashire, and Ruth Bidnell (18) from Penarth. They will be working with the Jamaica Baptist Union in the youth department, church programmes and a discipleship training.

PORTUGAL: Charlotte Newson (18) from Leigh on Sea, David Bullen (19) from Reigate, Surrey, James Gardiner (18) from Ashford, Kent and Liz Tedbury (20) from Gosport in Hampshire. They will be working with Norman Harrell, a Southern Baptist missionary from the USA involved in youth outreach, publicity, evangelism and leading church services.

MALTA: Simon Church (20) from Blackwood, Gwent, Catherine Crump (18) from Cambridge, Darrel Eaton (18) from Potters Bar, Herts, and Mhairi McKie (22) from Dumfriesshire. They will be involved in friendship evangelism mainly through open air work.

BRAZIL: Esther Potts (22) from Leeds, Laura

Williams (18) from Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, Catherine Ley (18) from Weston Super Mare, Avon, and Sarah-Jo Baldwin (21) from Burnley, Lancashire. They will work with BMS missionaries David and Cath Meikle in São Paulo involved in children's work, a new church plant project, door to door evangelism, radio and street rallies and helping at a local clinic.

Lift off: Ruth Bidnell

parachute jump to

raise money for her

place in the Jamiaca

prepares for a

sponsored

Action Team

THAILAND: Jennie Gilmore (18) from Cambridge, Leigh Cumming (22) from Fife, Sarah Teague (18) from Rochdale, Lancashire, and Ellen Armstrong (18) from Leeds, will divide their time between working with BMS missionaries Jacqui Wells in Chiang Mai and Geoff and Chris Bland in Bangkok. While they are in northern Thailand, team members will teach PE and English at the New Life Centre for. girls rescued from an enforced life of prostitution and teach children at a Karen hill tribe village. Moving south, they will be involved in church work in the new town of Bang Phle, outside Bangkok, and run a summer holiday programme at Klong Toey, in Bangkok.

For many of these young people it will be their first time away from home and while being apprehensive, they each feel that God has led them to this point in their lives and that he will be with them.

Please pray:

- for safe flights.
- that they quickly settle into new countries.
- for homesickness.
- for good health.
- for team relationships.
- for families and friends left behind.

David and Ann MacFarlane

The MacFarlanes moved in August from Altamura to pastor the church at Barletta, leaving Nicola Nuzzolese, an elder at Altamura, to take a pastoral role. David has also been appointed to co-ordinate the youth work in the regions of Puglia and Basilicata which includes around 30 churches. The move will provide a better base for the MacFarlanes' work among Baptists in the south of Italy and they will continue to be involved with the church at Altamura.

Please pray:

- for the new roles David and Ann are taking on.
- for Nicola Nuzzolese, elder of the Altamura church who will now take on a pastoral role.
- for the MacFarlane children as they settle into new schools.

Italy

prayerfocus

Asia



NEPAL

Martin and Katrina are currently studying at St Andrew's Hall Missionary College in Selly Oak, Birmingham, prior to leaving for Nepal early in 1997.

When in Nepal, Martin will be working as a Quality Manager for Nepal Hydro Electric and Butwal engineering works, a project producing electricity for villages.

The post will involve training employees and improving the quality of equipment and service. Technically, Martin feels that he has suitable background experience but the post also calls for "a lot of tact and perseverance" and "a high level of personal integrity".

Martin and Katrina are aware that problems can often arise from the completely different culture, values and priorities that people in Asia have compared to those in the West.

They are also aware of the need for God's guidance in helping them to discern

how they should react to different situations. Katrina continues to look for medical work in Butwal. about a seven hour road journey from Kathmandu, where it seems likely they will be living.

Please pray:

- for the remainder of their time at St Andrew's Hall, that they would emerge spiritually strong and prepared for the future
- preparations for a new life and work in a very different country
- language study upon arrival, they expect to find this difficult and are looking for a Nepalese family to live with while at language school in Kathmandu.

them. The patients love this as they get very little entertainment and just recently, four of them asked to be taken to church for the first time.

Margaret returns to UK this month for Home Assignment. Teachers Dale and Doris Urbain from the USA will be covering her work while she is on leave.

Please pray:

- thank God for providing teachers to take on Margaret's work, pray that they quickly get up to speed with the work
- for Margaret to quickly settle into Home Assignment and return to Nepal refreshed early next

President and his guard and the former Presidential guard and their leader. A compromise government is in place but it is not certain how long this will last without problems as peace is being maintained by a high profile French army with small tanks and armoured personnel carriers.

When Adrian and Sylvia returned to Bangui in early July – following their evacuation (report **m**h September) – all was calm. Officials were pleased to see people returning after the evacuation of the majority of expatriates in early June.

It would appear reports in the press about the level of destruction in the city have been exaggerated and many businesses do not appear to have suffered too much harm.

Supermarkets were open when Adrian and Sylvia arrived although most were empty. The French were still advising non-essential personnel to wait in Europe a little longer and no families had returned then. This leaves businesses with no customers.

There have been some anti-French demonstrations by people angry at the army's intervention

Africa





NEPAL

Margaret, who is attached to the International Nepal Fellowship, teaches the children of parents who work in the Tuberculosis and Leprosy project at Surkhet, in mid-west Nepal.

From time to time, Margaret takes them to a nearby leprosy clinic to meet the in-patients, sing for them and shake hands with



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Following a short-lived civil war in May, violence in the capital of Bangui was brought under control by the intervention of the French army. No political solution has been found however to solve what is in the main a battle between the

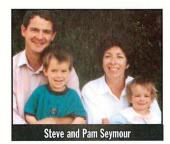


but the French government has attempted to pour oil on troubled waters by paying some of the salaries backlog of government employees. They were paid their May salary in August.

The River Blindness Control Programme, run by the Christoffel Blinden Mission, with which Adrian works, continued to operate throughout the troubles.

Please pray:

- for complete and lasting peace in CAR
- for safety as Adrian and Sylvia travel constantly through the Central Africa region



ZIMBABWE

God has been answering prayers for the Seymours, who have been working on business training and development programmes to help Zimbabweans start and manage their own businesses.

After a five and a half month appeal, they have been granted a two year extension to their work permits. This takes them to July 1998.

Also, Steve and Pam had made no headway looking for another house

after the owner of the one they were renting said he wanted to sell. Prices were far too high. Recently, the owner telephoned to say he had decided not to sell after all and they could rent the house for another two years.

Steve and Pam are involved in several development projects, including one in response to community requests, to empower people to prepare for drought.

It involves soil, water and

tree conservation, livestock and grain storage. They are also working on a micro hydro electric scheme for a primary school.

Please pray:

- thank God for visas and houses to rent.
- pray for the health of the family, Pam has been quite unwell but is now on the mend.
- for the development programs Pam and Steve are involved in through BWAid.

OCTOBER

Arrivals

Margaret Gibbs from Surket Joy Knapman from Colombo David Kerrigan from Colombo Derek Punchard from Curitiba

Departures

Bob and Ruth Ellett to Butwal lain and Karen Gordon to Kathmandu Chris and Sarah Mattock to Ferrara Joy Knapman to Colombo David Kerrigan to Colombo Derek Punchard to Curitiba

Overseas Visits

David Martin to Sri Lanka John Passmore to Italy Bill Slack to Italy Derek Rumbol to Zaire Phil Hindle to Zaire Delyth Wyn Davies to Zaire

Anonymous gifts

For May 1996

We are indebted to the generosity of those who give to the work of making Jesus known through BMS colleagues across the world and acknowledge:

TOTAL £2,544.89

Legacies

For May 1996

	£
Evans Mrs P M	500.00
Hampson Phyllis	500.00
Lawton Miss A E	200.00
Wilmot Mrs Clara	853.92
Preston Miss Jessie	3,734.94
TOTAL	£5,788.86

BMS projects

Up to August 28 1996

Breaking Chains (1995) 35,316.97 Arise and Build! (1996) 5,399.27 Mighty Warrior (young people) 782.06 By His Stripes (WOW) 2,459.56

zaire



Stephen and Elizabeth Allford

Stephen and Elizabeth work in the missionary affairs office of the Baptist Community of the River Zaire (CBFZ) Kinshasa, keeping the administrative wheels turning in a country where good communications are almost non-existent. Stephen also manages a maintenance service for church Land Rovers; Zaire generally is not known for its adherence to a strict vehicle maintenance regime!

They are expecting the birth of their first child in December and will return to the UK for Home Assignment next month, although Elizabeth may have to leave a little earlier – leaving Stephen with the end of year accounts! Before they return, Stephen has several jobs to complete on missionary houses in Kinshasa and Elizabeth is hoping to print a songbook she has been preparing over the past 18 months.

Recently the Allfords played host to a Christian video team, from Tandem TV & Video, of Hemel Hempstead, Herts, who have been shooting sequences for the new BMS video, Making Jesus Known, to be launched this month.

Please pray:

- for Elizabeth's health throughout her pregnancy
- for safe journeys home to the UK
- for Stephen completing end of year accounts for the CBFZ



Diary of a diary

the missing a

hours

t's not really too bad being dragged around, what seems like, every country in Asia and Europe. Having had those 10 years in Bangladesh, in some ways Europe now seems quite tame. Some things, though, come round with monotonous regularity, like having the new pages for the next year inserted into my genuine leather cover every autumn (I used to be called a

Filofax but now I've grown up I'm just known as an organiser) and the panic I hear in John's voice when I can't be found.

It's on to my blank pages, which come after the actual diary bit, that John writes the notes of all the incidents he's been recounting in **m**h and as I said last month I was, of course, there for most of them anyway. Not all, however, and the other incidents I recount from hearsay. I don't know



what would have happened if I had been lost at the bottom of the Grand Union Canal. Money, credit cards and diary all in one and all gone!

I do know, however, what did happen one day on Winchester station. It was Saturday afternoon and it should have been a straightforward journey from Didcot Parkway to Portsmouth Harbour and a ferry crossing to Le Havre. But BR was carrying out repairs to the line and so it was only at the last moment that we learned about the changed route which required an extra, very tight, connection in Winchester. The train from Reading was on time and the station screen showed a few minutes to spare before the Portsmouth train was due at platform one. Time for a quick call home to assure everyone that we'd made the connection and there was no need to worry.

While on the phone the station public address system announces a platform change. The Portsmouth train now arrives at platform five. The phone call ends abruptly and a mad dash made to said platform forgetting what was left on top of the phone.

John's story

Phew, just caught the train. This calls for a celebratory polystyrene cup of BR coffee. Ah, but where's the money? Where's the diary?



panic!

At least the ferry ticket was still in the overnight bag along with a little small change. On arrival at Portsmouth a quick call home from a coin phone box to get the credit and bank cards cancelled and then to the ferry. But wait, is that the courtesy bus I see disappearing into the distance? Now there's a new problem.

Diary's story

This is the bit that John didn't know. The next people to use the Winchester, platform one, phone box were a group of teenagers returning home to London from a football match. After making ribald comments and using me as a rugby ball for a while they investigated my contents and saw the sticker with an emergency number to be phoned in case

They followed the instructions, home was notified that the diary was found and in due course I was returned by post.

Brilliant.

Faith in today's youth restored.

Back in Portsmouth.

John to taxi driver: "How much to the ferry terminal please?"

Taxi driver: "Four pounds."

John: "I haven't got that much."

Taxi driver: "Tough."

John: "How far is it to walk?"

Taxi driver: "Too far in the time. You'll miss the ferry."

John: "Thanks!"

Starts walking.

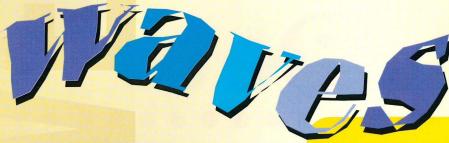
John to second taxi driver: "How far will £1.35 get me towards the ferry terminal?"

Second taxi driver: "Jump in, I'll take you there, no problem!"

Brilliant.

Faith in taxi drivers restored.

John Passmore, the BMS Europe Representative was a missionary in Bangladesh for ten years



WHOSE PROBLEM IS IT ANYWAY?

They satanise us, Milanko, a Christian Serb, told me. What I saw, when I was in his country, seemed to bear out the truth of what he said.

Sympathies have been easily stirred, and rightly so, for the dreadful situation of people in Croatia and Bosnia. It is less easy to raise compassion for the Serbs, who are seen as aggressors. Yet there are as many Serbian victims in this terrible civil war in Yugoslavia, which few people wanted and fewer understand.

Novi Sad in Serbia, although untouched by bombs, has immense social problems. The population of 250,000 has risen to at least 370,000, due to an influx of refugees from Croatia and Bosnia, with more expected in the next year as a result of the Dayton agreement. Many have lost all they possessed, and have little hope for the future.

In another place I visited, a group of about 30 people of all ages and both sexes live and sleep together in one large room,

> their possessions, pathetically few, stored under their beds. They have no money for basic needs, such as medicine, and nowhere to go.

Whose problem is it? For any country, such a rise in population would be difficult to cope with; for Serbia, virtually penniless after massive inflation and a costly war, it is impossible. Local Christians do their best. Tabita is a relief organisation, staffed by workers from the Baptist church. These hard-working people show the love of Jesus by distributing material aid and sharing

the gospel. Some refugees have come to Christ as a result. But Serbian Christians are themselves very poor, and the needs are overwhelming.

What is the church in the West doing? Trucks bringing aid from Holland and Germany arrive from time to time, but sometimes the food is so old, or so mice-infested, that it has to be destroyed. One group of Baptist churches in South Devon sends aid that is welcome and greatly appreciated.

Jesus told us to love our enemies. The Serbs aren't that, though they may not be very high in Britain's popularity charts. Their needs are desperate.

Whose problem is it anyway?

Margaret Pitt is a volunteer working with BMS in Serbia teaching English as a foreign language. She started her voluntary service in March.

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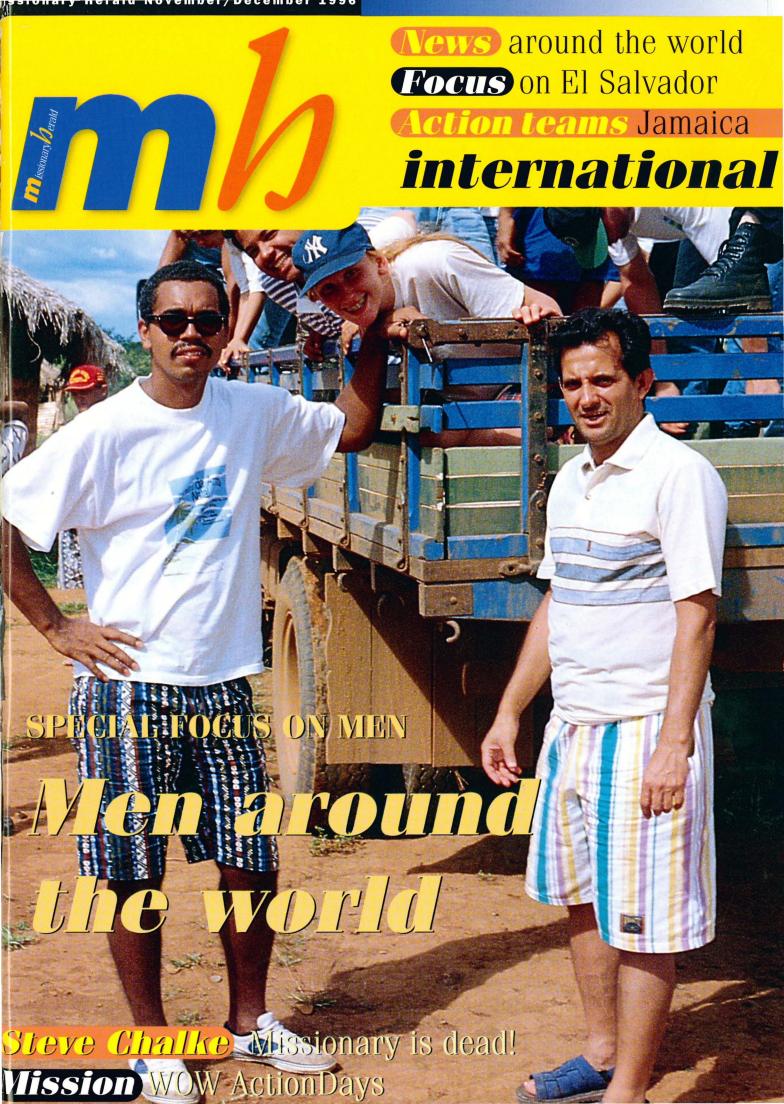
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The subject of men is not an easy one to tackle objectively. The strides made towards

equality of the sexes in Britain have been accompanied by much controversy, not least in the area of leadership in the church.

Reaching men for Christ is a different issue, depending not on the gender of the leadership but on a vision and strategy to reach them. For a variety of reasons church is not a turn-on for men in many areas; take Brazil, for example, where the nation's "religion", football, is being used creatively as a means of reaching men with the gospel.

Our coverage this month is intended to help towards an understanding of the challenge to Christians in different cultures of a need to adopt different strategies in making Jesus known among men.

Richard Wells

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Cover Story
MEN THE WORLD OVER
The role of men in their church and culture ${f 4}$
Steve Chalke
THE 'MISSIONARY' WORD
A challenge to our "missionary" thinking 9
News Section
FOREIGN AND HOME NEWS)
Taking a look at the world from a global perspective 11
Centre Special
WOW! THE AMAZING ROADSHOW
How BMS motivated children for world mission 18
Country Focus
mb LOOKS AT EL SALVADOR
Jan Kendall's regular national overview 20
Mission File
IDEAS AND OPINIONS
Facts, figures and background resource material 26
Letters to the Editor
Personal Prayer
(WHO AND WHAT TO PRAY FOR)
BMS 28:19 Action Team in Asia
Prayer points from BMS colleagues around the world 30
John Passmore
A SIDEWAYS LOOK
Diary to diary: water water everywhere
Waves
AN INDEPENDENT VIEW
Vivienne Lassiter is this month's guest writer 35
NEW FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1997
YOUR TOP-RATED m b, PLUS
 Leaders abroad – visiting church leaders from Britain
report on how churches in other countries are
working. • Project feedback – news from BMS projects you have

PICTURE: BMS Library

New columnists to join our own John Passmore.

FRONT COVER: Brazilian men preparing for a day out together

supported around the world.



IS THERE A PROBLEM REACHING MEN FOR CHRIST THAT'S THE SAME THE WORLD OVER? OR IS IT JUST A WESTERN PHENOMENON?

JAN KENDALL ASKED FOUR BMS

MISSIONARIES ABOUT THE ROLE OF MEN IN THEIR CHURCHES AND CULTURE.

Men the world

Q IS IT EASIER TO REACH MEN THAN WOMEN WHERE YOU'RE WORKING?

Owen: Not necessarily, but it's probably easier for men to reach men and for women to reach women in Zaire.

Sue: No, it's easier to reach women in Bangladesh.

Betsy: Yes, that's so in Albania too.

Vince: It's the same in Brazil.

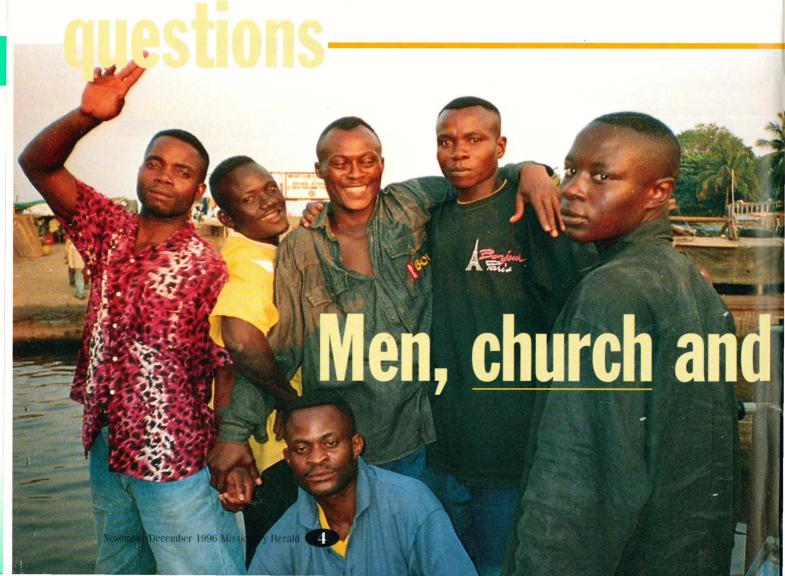
Q WHY DO YOU THINK THIS IS SO?

Vince: Brazil is a male-dominated society, a man's world. Women are not treated well or equally by Brazilian men. Men tend to be conscious of their masculinity and Church does not fit very well into their masculine image. Men work hard and long and use their free time for drinking and sports. The Catholic church supports this masculine role and accommodates Brazilian men.

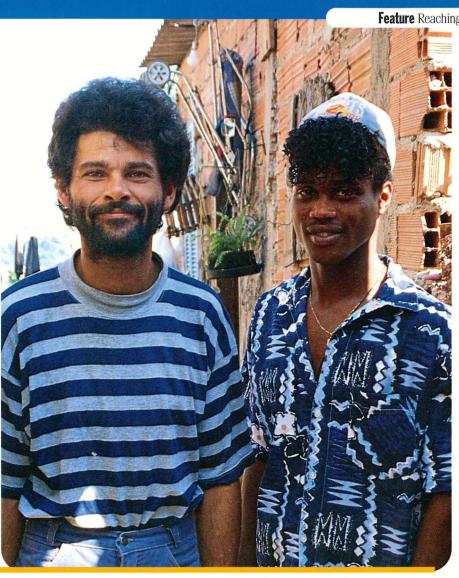
Betsy: This happens in Albania, too, because Albania is a predominantly Muslim country, and men are placed in a higher position in society than women and young people.

Owen: Yes, in Zaire, too, there are traditional roles for both men and women, and these are largely followed.

Betsy: In Albania a man can allow his



Feature Reaching men



'Local churches do little to reach men in particular. More is done to reach women. But the church needs to reach men. Men need to work among the men'

ovei

woman and his children to "change their faith" and to be baptised, but he must keep the tradition of his ancestors. If a man becomes a Christian he may even be called a traitor and be isolated from his family. We know one man whose family actually tore up his Bible because he was a Christian and this was seen as a disgrace for the family.

Sue: In Bangladesh it's culturally easier to reach women. Women are oppressed and many are looking for an escape out of the cycle of poverty. So I find them more open.

Q CAN YOU EXPLAIN A BIT ABOUT THE ROLE OF MEN IN THE CHURCH?

Sue: Men are in the leadership roles in the Bangladeshi church. Usually one woman (or possibly two) are on the diaconate but the role is less powerful than the man's. Men lead services, preach, pray, and make the decisions. Women only deal with the women's meeting and Sunday School.

Vince: In Brazil, too, men control the leadership; for instance, a woman could not be a pastor, but she does have a wide range of responsibilities within the church.

Betsy: There aren't that many men in the Albanian church, and their role is still marginal. But we're seeing God working among them, and some leaders are emerging. The men in the church are now encouraging

others to make this decision.

Owen: Traditionally men predominate in public affairs in Zaire, and this is reflected in church life - except for women's work, where the women come into their own.

Q WHAT ARE THE LOCAL CHURCHES DOING TO REACH MEN?

Betsy: At the moment there isn't much going on in this direction. However, in our church there is a very good mens' club; and the more they become in number, the more proud they are to follow Christ together. We have a Bible study group for men which is going well; they seem to enjoy the freedom of being together as Christian men, without family pressures.

Vince: It's mostly visitation and personal evangelism by the Men's movement to contacts and friends. That's all really.

Sue: Local churches do little to reach

continues on page 6



MEN THE WORLD OVER

men in particular. More is done to reach women. But the church needs to reach men. Men need to work amongst the

Owen: Little activity is organised specifically for men, apart from malevoice choirs, and, where there are professional people, Gideons and Full Gospel associations. Any general church outreach, however, in the form of evangelisation, house-visitation, and so on, is addressed to men because women only get involved in church activities with their husbands consent.

Q DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER OBSERVATIONS?

Sue: Because of the Islam religion, men

'Traditional gender roles are changing . . . as more girls get an education'

are more important than women in Bangladesh - legally their word is worth the word of two women. So men in Bangladesh are in charge of everything, in every aspect of life. Since I don't work

among men I can't comment further about their role but I have noticed a change in the role of women with whom I work, and I feel the change is due to education and jobs. Although these jobs may be very simple, they do provide the women, and therefore their family, with extra income which gives the woman more of a sense of power as she looks after the family budget. Their husbands, in turn, respect their wives more.

Owen: In Zaire traditional gender roles are changing, particularly in the towns, as more girls get an education, and as young people are influenced by Western values through magazines and TV. The present economic situation, too, is having an adverse effect on the status of men, because of unemployment and

underpayment. This affects relationships within the family.

Vince: I think it's different in Brazil. Men there are very friendly and are often natural evangelists when converted. They tend to say anything or promise anything to be friendly without much concern to fulfil what they say. This means they easily accept the gospel, then forget it. They easily promise to come to church without any real intention to come. Brazilian men are superstitious and religious at a very shallow level, but when they are converted Brazilian men make fine Christians.

Betsy: I'd say in Albania there seems to be a difference between men coming from Muslim tradition and those coming from Catholic/Orthodox origin. Those from a Catholic or Orthodox origin have a Christian background and conversion means a deeper understanding of what they already know in part. But those from a Muslim tradition must make a total conversion, as well as a clear break with some traditional habits. This means it's almost impossible for a practising Muslim; and even for non-practising Muslims the change is great and they have to begin from zero.

Owen Clark, is involved in church work in Zaire, with his wife, Deanna

Betsy Guarna and her husband, Saverio, serve with the BMS in Albania.

Vince MacDougall is involved in church and evangelistic work in Brazil with his wife, Sadie. Sue Headlam, a nurse in Bangladesh, is also involved in a Community Health Programme.

MAN

They look surpris

A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE HOME, THEY USED TO SAY. BUT **BMS WORKER ANDY WILSON** HAS FOUND A NICHE FOR HIMSELF... AS A HOUSE-HUSBAND



ed when they hear that I have to do the washing

octors and mechanics don't go together. That's what they told us when Jenny and I were engaged.

There was nothing about our relationship that most people would class as normal – meeting at Bible school in preparation to go to Africa, getting married in the middle of learning French in Paris and settling down to life in Cameroon.

Both of us were in great demand while in Cameroon. Jenny would have a constant stream of sick people knocking at the door, and for me there were



always sick cars or cycles, or people with all manner of mechanical problems to see me.

But when we returned to the UK, it was Jenny who found no difficulty in finding a partnership to join – there was a shortage of General Practitioners, especially women.

The question was, with Jenny working full time, who would do the housework?

Having lived on my own for 10 years, I was no stranger to cooking, ironing and cleaning but the idea of doing this for someone else didn't thrill me. And, anyway, how do you iron a bra?

It was decided that I would take on the household duties and look for a part-time job for a couple of days a week. It was then that I saw the position with BMS for a half-time person to look after the society's volunteer scheme, The Barnabas Project.

It transpired that Jenny and I started work on the same day, the surgery being 60 metres from our house and BMS being 60 miles.

People often ask: "And what do you do when you're not at Baptist House?"

They look surprised when they hear that I have to do the washing.

And it can be amusing when at work checking our diaries in the Department for Missionaries, my colleagues find they are interviewing, or having to attend meetings. I'm usually doing the vacuuming, or cooking the meal.

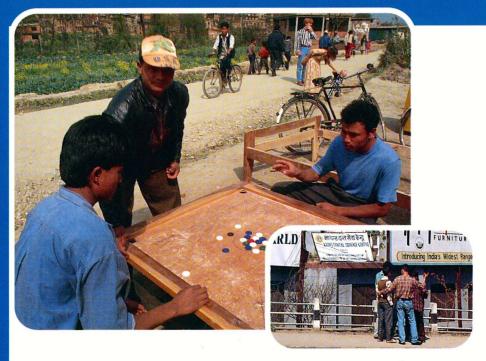
Being a house-husband isn't all that bad, maybe because it is only part-time and there is always someone with a car that needs medical attention whenever I need distracting. I've managed to avoid watching the soaps — except EastEnders which, according to BUGB General Secretary David Coffey, is standard Baptist viewing — mainly because there is always a lot to do in the house.

Looking in the supermarkets, I see that there are many men in the same situation as me, and we enjoy exchanging recipes in the deli queue.

I won't say any more about this, just in case Jenny thinks this is a cushy number... and wants to swap roles. •

Andy Wilson is BMS Barnabas Project Co-ordinator based at Baptist House, Didcot.

Man to Man



MEN HOLD THE KEY TO STEMMING THE SPREAD OF HIV INFECTION IN NEPAL.

SALLY SMITH

SHARES THE FINDINGS OF HER RESEARCH IN THE COUNTDOWN TO A VITAL CAMPAIGN IN THE FIGHT AGAINST **AIDS**

ne predominant theme in traditional Nepalese belief is the central place of food and eating. With food, gods are worshipped, ancestors sustained, malignant spirits pacified, social status defined, and long life, health and prosperity assured.

Food links people in relationships. A wife is responsible for preparing "bhaat" rice for her husband, but eats only what is left. He depends on her to provide the meal, she depends on him for the quality and quantity of what he leaves her.

Illnesses are commonly believed to be caused by a hungry malicious spirit. Because spirits are ranked in a similar way to the caste system for humans, ancestral spirits are regularly fed and so pacified but illness-causing spirits – usually of those who died inauspiciously or without family to perform the correct funeral rites – go hungry, so they attack humans either to "eat" them or to get a food

offering out of them.

These spirits may attack alone or may be sent by a "bokshi" - a woman with spiritual power who can induce a spirit to do her bidding by feeding it herself. The bokshi - or witches - are commonly identified as wives of men with whom the family is in conflict, or a

Food, evil spirits and sex combine to point the way forward in an attempt to stem the spread of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection in Nepal. But before any Christian mission health campaign can be launched among men there is a need to understand the complicated relationships between the sexes. Sally Smith has spent the past year researching these beliefs and is now incorporating the findings into a prevention and education programme for the United Mission to Nepal. But what is the relevance of all this to Christian mission? Firstly, consider how radical Jesus' teachings were to the relationships between the sexes in his own day, and secondly, how HIV infection in Asia today is already creating similar reactions in society to the outcast — the lepers and the women — of Jesus' day. The very ones he reached out to...

> daughter-in-law, and their spells can be transmitted by food. For this reason many people will eat only at home.

It is here that sex begins to intertwine. Any evidence of women's sexuality separate from a man, such as in childbirth or in menstruation, is seen as polluting. At these times women are too polluted to enter the kitchen and prepare food. Neither must a woman touch a man or child at these times it's sinful and it is believed the child may become ill as a result.

A woman's only source of spiritual

purity or merit is gained through her relationships with men. She can exercise her spiritual power to preserve life, in particular, to prolong her husband's life, by fasting during her unpolluted times. But if he dies early, she may be accused of "eating" him.

With information like this, along with research data, it becomes easier to predict the way HIV/AIDS may fit into the

beliefs about illness and misfortune. A wife with HIV is likely to be blamed for the illness; it is she who would be assumed to have had an affair. For this reason several



women said they would not tell their husband if they became HIV-infected.

Another strong concept in Nepalese belief is that sexual behaviour is wrong if exposed to public knowledge, which works against a wife who becomes infected with HIV by her husband. Since his extra-marital sex is hidden, the birth of an HIV-infected baby exposes the woman's infection but not her husband's.

Women are already blamed for infertility or the failure to produce a son and it is a simple step to add the blame for HIV and the husband's subsequent wasting and death. Already, in the short time that HIV has been in Nepal, prostitutes have been blamed for its introduction and spread, with barely a mention of clients' responsibilities. The next step in the process of absorbing this disease into the cultural framework could be to blame wives.

Given the negative social position of women in Nepali culture, health education about HIV/AIDS prevention targeted at a largely faithful and vulnerable group of women will be ineffectual. A better way is to exploit the positive position of men, seeking much more positive cultural concepts and applying them to HIV/AIDS preventative education.

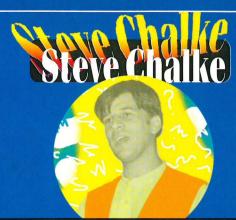
In general, a man is better educated than his wife. He is older, has independent financial resources, is free to move in society, has access to literature and other communication media, and may choose his relationships.

His responsibilities are to provide for and protect his wife and children, to educate them and give the children a future. The concept of a "Bujne manche" - understanding one - is strong in Nepali society and there is a certain pride in not being ignorant.

There is a strong male network of friends and confidantes. Men say they would tell their closest friend - an

continues on page 10





THE MISSIONARY IS DEAD AND GONE

From 1 June 1997, the Baptist Missionary Society and its publication, Missionary Herald will officially be known as Interlink. In a statement issued yesterday, a senior source remarked: "The missionary is dead and gone."

Before you throw up your arms in horror, convinced that that "Steve Chalke has gone too far this time", let me set you straight. I'm not saying for a moment that we shouldn't be telling people about Jesus, that we shouldn't be doing this abroad, or that the Baptist missionary movement doesn't have a key role to play in the next millennium.

So what's the problem? Well, basically, it's the word: MISSIONARY. However fond we Christians may be of it, the reality is that nowadays it conjures up all the wrong images in people's minds. When the Great British Public (and half our church members) think of missionaries, they think of pith helmets, boiling pots, Dr Livingstone and the infamous "missionary position". When Britain had an Empire, "missionary" and "colonial" were words to be proud of. But today they're misunderstood, and therefore . . . well, frankly, they're an embarrassment.

Take another example of the way in which language changes. I'm an "evangelist". Telling people about Jesus is part of my job and part of my nature. But evangelist isn't a word I'm comfortable using publicly. Why? Because it, too, is misunderstood. Thanks to a few bad apples (most of them American) and a sea change in culture, the word is off limits. Like it or not, it's now shorthand for a narrow-minded, Bible-thumping, convert-seeking, money-grabbing, hypocritical bigot. And needless to say, that's not the kind of image I want to give out! So if I introduced myself as an evangelist on television, both ITV and the BBC would swiftly pull the plug.

Surely I'm overstating the case. Is it really necessary to go as far as changing the name? After all, as Shakespeare said:

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

But the truth is that even in Shakespeare a name can make all the difference in the world. In Romeo and Juliet, from which this saying comes, it literally makes the difference between life and death. If either Romeo or Juliet had been called Smith, their story would have had a much happier ending.

Contrary to what we'd like to believe, image does matter. That's why, to avoid old stigmas and to reflect modern medical opinion, The Spastics Society changed its name to Scope. It's also why the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship changed its name to Interserve, and one of the reasons why the Evangelical Union of South America and Regions Beyond Missions Union, when they joined together, chose the name Latin Link.

As the 21st Century dawns, why are we still using 19th century labels? "Times have changed. Opportunities have changed. Even what we do has changed. The modern missionary is rarely a professional pastor. Instead, they serve as a teacher, doctor, nurse, engineer or agriculturist. In fact, entry restrictions in a number of countries make it impossible to send any other kind of 'missionary'! 'Missionaries' are just ordinary Christians who choose to work abroad, with support from a church and a sending body to act as 'salt' and 'light'."

It's not as if the word "missionary" were set in stone or sanctioned by the Bible. In fact, it's not even mentioned in the New Testament. It may be time-honoured, but the word "missionary" just comes from a Latin verb meaning "to send". The closest New Testament equivalent is "apostle", literally meaning "one who is sent".

It's time to stop using the word "missionary" altogether. In its place, we need new terminology that remains faithful to biblical principles, but more accurately reflects current thinking. So is it time to make an announcement?

The Baptist Missionary Society and Missionary Herald are dead!

Long live their staff, their commitment, their energy and their vision!

STEAE CHALKE IS INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR OF OASIS TRUST

EDITOR'S NOTE: We're very grateful to Steve Chalke for being our mh columnist for 1996.



continued from page 10

"understanding" friend – if they became HIV positive, so the advice of a respected friend would be especially welcome.

Rather than promoting the condom as an HIV/AIDS campaign symbol – something associated with negative ideas in Nepali thought – "attention grabbers" to advertise health education meetings for men need to harness positive values, building on the need to "protect" and "advise" youngsters and so prepare the ground for schools work.

Like...

"How does the 'understanding man' protect his family from this disease? Come and become an understanding one"

"Are you an understanding friend? If your friend is at risk of getting HIV can you protect him? How can you advise him? Wouldn't you expect him to advise you if you were in danger?"

"As a responsible father, how can I protect my son from ruin?"

"Is it really an 'understanding' father who overlooks his son's faults as long as they remain hidden? Are you going to wait for his ruin before you advise him?"

Freeing women from a complicated web of susceptibility to HIV will not be achieved without far reaching changes in society, most importantly, co-operation from the menfolk. It's not a simple case of running women's support groups or workshops.

In a culture where sexual partners are not necessarily confidantes, and sex may well never be mentioned between man and woman, let alone discussed; where a woman who speaks of anything sexual openly is in danger of being branded as a "bad woman", it would be unethical to encourage women to persuade their menfolk to use a condom.

Western concepts of increasing women's negotiating skills may be counterproductive for Nepali women. A start must be made with the men, emphasising their fidelity and role as protector of their family.

After all, isn't that one of Jesus' key messages?

BMS colleagues Ian and Sally Smith serve with the United Mission to Nepal, involved in health work.

new life in Jesus from a

PASSION FOR FOOTBALL

GETTING THE MEN
INTERESTED IN A
GROUP OF WOMEN IS
NOT USUALLY A
PROBLEM – UNLESS
IT'S IN CHURCH, SAYS
MARK GREENWOOD

he idea of activities specifically for men in the congregation in Genibaú came from a realisation that after two years of ministry, few men had shown lasting commitment to the Lord. The message isn't getting across, be it for faults in our ministry or cultural factors which keep them from church.

As a man in the congregation, I had become lonely with so little male



fellowship. How difficult would it be for a new convert from this predominantly macho culture to loosen his bonds with his mates and join in with a group of women? Some way of communicating God's love to these guys had to be developed, within a male environment.

Further incentive comes from the life experience of the congregation's ladies. Many suffer abuses in the home, not always physical; infidelity too, drink-related problems (cultural norms) and bearing the brunt of the insecurity of living on the periphery. Life for these families is a struggle, and the men's common reaction is to opt out of the responsibility; the women fight alone.

This pattern is far from universal, but the problem adds to the urgency of presenting a new life in Christ in an accessible way. One's true manhood lies not in how many pints you can knock back, nor in the number of women you have, but in Christ. If a man understands that, not just he but his family is transformed.

Natural opportunities to involve the men in church activities arise through building work and special family services, which have, indeed, borne some fruit, but a more consistent programme with alternative forms of meetings is needed.

Most men who work here work a six day week. One of their few ways to relax is Sunday football, about which they are passionate. So the conclusion we came to, together with members' husbands, was Sunday morning five-aside with biblical reflections between matches.

Let's see if it works.

Mark and Suzana Greenwood serve with the BMS in Fortaleza, Brazil, doing community and church work.

MISSION NEWS FROM HOME AND ABROAD

Dream for the 21st century

Alistair Brown has a big dream. It's a dream of a world changed through Christians' deep desire for others to believe in Jesus Christ – a passion for mission.

It is no pipe dream, no super-spiritual castle in the air. Alistair is convinced the church in Britain must catch the dream. And, as the new General Director, he wants BMS to be a front-runner in realising this dream.

His passion for mission is infectious. The church at which he was in leadership until August has a fire for mission – it has sent mission personnel through Europe, Africa and Asia, it gives 20 per cent of its income to mission and every summer dozens of the congregation get involved in mission.

It's a church that is growing but then, says Alistair, a church with a big vision for mission IS a growing church.

With such a strong passion for sharing the gospel, articulated unequivocally, you'd expect Alistair to be as loud as he is determined.

Not so.

The former journalist on The Scotsman is anything but a blusterer. Quietly persuasive, calmly



discoursive, he is a master of logic - theo-logic.

God has an unconditional love for a lost world and if we are children of this God. we have our Father's nature. Thus, he reasons, we share his love for the world. Result - we should also be passionate about mission.

"Mission is commanded by God - an order we can't set aside because we'd rather do other things," he argues. "Mission is also necessary, otherwise people will be lost. No one else has the job of sharing the message of Christ - God doesn't have an alternative plan if we fail."

For the past 21 years, Alistair (46) has demonstrated his passion for the gospel not only through his pastoral and teaching ministry but also through his writing. He is author of five books, the latest - Near Christianity – having just

been published by Hodder and Stoughton.

From beginnings in journalism in 1967, he began to feel God's call into fulltime Christian work and gained a place at Edinburgh University where he studied for three degrees – BA, BD and PhD. While studying he was able to continue working part-time for The Scotsman, gaining valuable writing, editing and communication experience.

Growth has been a hallmark of his ministry. At Dedridge, from 1979 to 1986, membership rose from 37 to 150. At his last post, Gilcomston Park, Aberdeen, a rise in numbers not only forced a move to a new building in Gerrard Street and a change of name, but resulted in a church plant at Sheddocksley.

November opens a new chapter for Alistair and BMS. Commissioned at a

special service in Edinburgh in October, Alistair will carry through the BMS strategy, launched under retiring General Director Reg Harvey, into the 21st

In the next 25 years the strategy aims to direct BMS resources away from countries where more than 60% of the population claim to be Christian, and towards the unevangelised. It majors on these areas:

- Evangelism to unreached peoples.
- Urban ministries, women's, youth and children's work.
- Greater use of scripture, Christian literature and the media for sharing the gospel.
- Healing, development and education ministries.
- Commitment to the search for justice and peace.

It will require a strong commitment by Baptists to prayer, dedicated giving and active promotion.

Alistair says: "In the west, we've got used to ineffectiveness in our witness. We call that normal. By biblical standards and the evidence of what is happening in many parts of the Third World, it's abnormal. It's time for a big dream of what mission can accomplish in this world."

Good news on the Cutting Edge

Thursday 7 November 1996

Western Area: Westbury on Trym Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Saturday 16 November 1996

Cardiff: Albany Road Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Tuesday 19 November 1996

Carmarthen: Penuel Keynote speaker: John Lewis (Gorsley)

Friday 22 November 1996

Bangor: Penuel Keynote speaker: Peter Dewi Richards

Saturday 23 November 1996

Wrexham: Chester Street

Keynote speaker: Geraint Morse

Friday 29 November 1996

Lancs and Cheshire Association: Liverpool, Stuart Road. Keynote speaker: John James

Friday 10 January 1997

Yorkshire Association: Leeds, South Parade Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Sunday 12 January 1997

Northern Association: Middlesbrough, South Bank Keynote speaker: Alan Pain

Friday 17 January 1997

Cambridge: Histon Baptist Church Keynote speaker: Michael Quicke

Saturday 18 January 1997

Buckinghamshire: Union, High Wycombe. Keynote speaker: Steve Gaukroger

Friday 7 February 1997

Nottingham: Watnall Road,

Keynote speaker: David Coffey

Saturday 8 February 1997

Leicester: Central Baptist Church. Keynote speaker: John Lewis (Skipton)

Friday 7 March 1997

South-west area: Exeter, South

Keynote speaker: Ian Coffey

Thursday 13 March 1997

Wales, venue to be confirmed. Keynote speaker: Andrew Green

Friday 14 March 1997

Sutton Coldfield Baptist Church. Keynote speaker: Andrew Green

Friday 11 April 1997

Glasgow, venue to be confirmed. Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Saturday 12 April 1997

Aberdeen, venue to be confirmed. Keynote speaker: Bill Slack

Sunday 13 April 1997

Edinburgh: Charlotte Chapel Keynote speaker: Bill Slack

Hundreds of **Baptists** have heard the message: BMS is committed to sharing the good news of salvation in Jesus

Christ worldwide and challenges Baptists in Britain to become actively involved.

It has been the theme of **BMS** President Carolyn Green's national tour, At The Cutting Edge, organised to inspire Baptists to commit themselves to world mission and to demonstrate that the society is at the forefront of making Jesus known globally.

She has been doing this through breakfast and lunch meetings with church

Stuart Clarke, pastor at St Leonard's Baptist Church, on the south coast in East Sussex, who hosted a leaders' breakfast in September. He vowed to share the real BMS with his local ministers' fraternal, and those who attended the breakfast left determined to encourage greater support within the churches.

The challenge thrown out by the celebration keynote speakers has set people buzzing about the response Christians should make to the need for sharing the gospel worldwide. David Hall, the West Sussex Baptist Association's Director for Mission, spoke at the celebration in Horsham of the value of people who take the good news and the importance of those who support them.

Carolyn is delighted with the positive response she and her Cutting Edge team are receiving. "We are very definitely at the cutting edge of mission today. Our vision is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ; it always has been. As an expression of the Baptist community in Britain, we need the wholehearted commitment of our people. If Baptists don't back the work, no one else will."

Since the tour started in the south-east of England in June, Carolyn has made presentations using video and slides to leaders in Essex, Sussex, Kent and the greater London area. Celebration meetings drew hundreds to Southend, Horsham, and Ealing and Bexleyheath in London.







leaders, receptions for those who promote mission in the churches, and celebrations with keynote speakers.

In the short time the show has been on the road, it has become clear that many hold an image of BMS as a dowdy, ponderous society locked in the past.

Nothing could be further from the truth, declared



BB appeal organisers retire



After 25 years as organisers of the Boys' Brigade fund-raising appeal for BMS, Beryl and Peter Dignum have retired. Over the years, Beryl and Peter, who live at Watford, Herts.,

have enabled BB companies attached to Baptist Churches to raise more than £200,000 to support the work of BMS.

Lorna and David Hyson, members of Cheam Baptist Church, Surrey, are to take over as appeal organisers. The number of BB companies taking part in the appeal has declined over recent years and the couple are hoping to reverse the situation with the support of missionary organisers in churches with BB Companies, encouraging them to support this worthwhile appeal.

Phil Marsden, BMS Youth and Children's Coordinator, who manages the BB project development, said: "Beryl and Peter have been involved in this important ministry for a long time and we're very grateful for all that they've done. We're glad that Lorna and David are able to take on this role and I'm looking forward very much to working with them."

French pastor dies in a fall



French Pastor and youth worker Christian Helmlinger died tragically on September 17, while working on the ceiling of his church building in Bordeaux. Christian was

working with a colleague when he fell, sustaining head injuries.

The 43-year-old father of four served as pastor from 1979 in both Grenoble and in Bordeaux, as national youthworker for the Baptist Union in France and formerly as a member of the executive committee for Baptist Youthwork in Europe.

Christian's ministry was an inspiration to many, not least of all the 1996 BMS 28:19 Action Team who worked with him in Bordeaux during their six month overseas assignment.

Jean-Pierre Dassonville of the Fédération des Eglises Evangéliques Baptistes said: "The French Baptist family and, we believe, the world Baptist family, are losing a real leader in his full strength and in whom we had great

Christian's family – in particular his widow, Natcha, and their four children – will appreciate prayer support. His church, friends and colleagues across Europe are deeply shocked.

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Stock up with BMS goodies - and help support the work of sharing the gospel worldwide! Our high quality notecards, with a French flavour, are going well. The inside is blank for your own message and a pack of 10 costs just £2.95.

High quality BMS Christmas cards, introduced for the first time this year, are selling quickly. You have the choice of three exclusive designs - a calligraphic card, 10 in a pack for £1.95, and two picture designs, 12 in a pack for £1.95 so there's something to suit almost everyone's tastes. Order any five packs and you pay for only four!

Out this month is our free Ways of Giving leaflet. We've produced it in response to questions from a number of mission supporters about making gifts to the work of BMS. It provides an overview on a variety of ways to give and points the way to more detailed leaflets which are available.

Don't forget to place an order for your 1997 calendar. Each month's large colour picture is an evocative scene from a country in which BMS personnel are working. Designed to fit neatly on to a kitchen or office wall, the calendar is priced at just £4.50.

Thank you for your support of BMS during the year. I hope you have a pleasant Christmas.

CHRISTINE

one wil



ARGENTINA

Following a vote by its citizens, the town of Villa Libertadot San Martin, 500km from Buenos Aires has banned tobacco, alcohol, discos, video games and lotteries. The ban is based on the teaching of the Seventh-Day **Adventist Church of which most local people** are members. The 5,000 population town is home to an Adventist university with 2,000 students and an Adventist health centre famous for its spa treatment. There are no long haired youths or mini skirts in Villa Libertador and the only music on local radio stations is folk and classical. (EN)

COLOMBIA

A storm of protest has erupted in Colombia over a suggestion by Human Rights **Ombudsman José Castro that prostitutes** should be sterilised as a way of deterring child abandonment. Castro said that preventing prostitutes from having children would fulfil the constitutional mandate requiring "responsible procreation" adding that the majority of juvenile delinquents are children of prostitutes. No evidence was offered to back up this claim. One journalist responded by saying: "Why doesn't he also propose assassinating street children, castrating transvestites, killing beggars, crucifying the blind, putting illiterate people in stocks and sacrificing blacks and indians in the gas chamber?" (LAP)

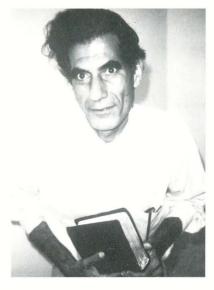
ENGLAND

Youth With a Mission (YWAM) hope that their new study Bible, available from July 1997, will help readers " know God and make him known" by leading them through a study of the nature and character of God. The International Discipleship Bible (working title) is a joint project between YWAM England, the **International Bible Society and US publishers** Zondervan. Initially published in English and using the NIV version, this Bible will also incorporate teaching from YWAM's foundational Discipleship Training School's six month programme. Included will be thematic tracks, mini biographies on "heroes of the faith", profiles of unreached people groups and extracts of books by YWAM leaders. The new Bible will eventually be published in ten other languages with YWAM proceeds helping to fund other translations and distribution. (YWAM)

NORTH AFRICA

One of only 40 known Christians among a nomadic desert people group, has become the first to complete specialised training to help him return to share the gospel with his people. Ahmed, became the first Tuareg to graduate from a Christian university when he gained a degree in Christian Ministries from the University of Nations in Lome, Togo, The Tuareg, who are almost completely Muslim, are a fierce Saharan desert tribe. Ahmed helps to broadcast a radio programme which reaches Tuareg communities across north Africa and helps new converts in their faith. (YWAM)

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'Unhappily the church here in **Kuwait has not** been successful in bringing Robert into a programme of personal growth in Christ in the area of accountability'

Persecuted Christian Robert Hussein is considering his future in America after fleeing Kuwait where he was under sentence of death, reports Sam Gibson.

The 44-year-old, was ruled apostate by a Kuwaiti court when he announced his conversion from Islam to Christianity. Originally, Robert had expressed a wish to remain in Kuwait despite the fact extremist fundamentalist Moslems had threatened to kill him. In August however, with the help of the organisation Christian Solidarity International (CSI), he fled to the USA on a six month visa, where he is currently in hiding.

After publicly announcing his conversion in December 1995, Robert's wife filed for divorce in a Shari'a family court. Islamic lawyers then

Cowboy missionaries saddle up

A new Youth With a Mission (YWAM) ministry, set up by former professional rodeo cowboy Brent Baumann, aims to evangelise unreached people groups by training American cowboys as missionaries.

Brent says: "Cowboys are a breed apart. They are their own people, and many of them wouldn't step inside a regular church - you have to go to them, in their environment, at the rodeo."

He believes that once they have made a commitment to Christ, cowboys are uniquely

qualified to share their faith in more challenging parts of the world: "They can go to parts of the world where the horse is a central part of the culture - South America and Central Asia for example.

"The typical cowboy also has qualities that suit him for frontier missions - he is rugged and used to hardship. He has boldness and doesn't give up easily."

Brent's ministry is not just for cowboys, it is aimed at anyone who identifies with the horse and Western lifestyle. (YWAM)

e Kuwaiti Christian

opened a case in the family courts to have him officially declared apostate (one who has turned from his beliefs) resulting in a loss of all rights to his children and the building business which he owned.

The religious ruling also opens the way for Moslem leaders to demand his execution. An appeal against the conviction on the basis that apostasy is not a civil offence was set for September 15 but adjourned for a month to allow either Robert or someone with power of attorney, to attend. It is not yet certain if Robert will go ahead with the appeal now he has left the country.

Christians and human rights groups across the world rallied to support Robert. He hid with expatriate Christian families whilst in Kuwait, an Internet site was set up to provide up to date information on his case and thousands of Christians wrote letters of

protest to the Kuwaiti crown prince and embassies.

The National Evangelical Church of Kuwait, which is tolerated but not allowed to evangelise, supported Robert's fight for religious freedom, said that he had distanced himself from the church. A pastoral team spokesman said: "Unhappily the church here in Kuwait has not been successful in bringing Robert into a programme of personal growth in Christ in the area of accountability."

Stuart Windsor, of CSI, says: "Robert still needs prayer. Please pray for Christians to come alongside him. He needs to come under the authority of the Church now."

Robert is grateful to the thousands in the UK and across the world who have prayed for him, written letters of support and offered other practical aid. He now needs to rest, grow in his relationship with Christ and plan for his long term future.

A of G join boycott of Disney

The Assemblies of God (AoG), with 2.5 million members in USA has joined the Southern Baptists in boycotting the Walt Disney Company because of its links to a film and book sympathetic to homosexuals.

Like the Southern Baptists, the AoG resolution objects to the book Growing Up Gay published by a Disney subsidiary and to Disney's acquisition of Miramax which distributed the film Priest, about a homosexual priest in the Roman Catholic Church.

The Southern Baptists also objected to "gay days" at Disney World and to the extension of health benefits to live-in partners of gay employees.

A Disney spokesman said: "We question any group that demands that we deprive people of health benefits, and we know of no tourist destination in the world that denies admission to people as the Baptists are insisting."

Both groups are demanding a return by the Disney company to family values. (ENI)

Update

Chernobyl plea . . . 10 years on

The Belorussian people, keen that the world should not forget the effects of the Chernobyl nuclear power station disaster of 10 years ago, have issued a heart-rending appeal: Help save our children.

The effects of the catastrophe at Chernobyl, in neighbouring Ukraine, were felt as far away as Sweden, and Belarus, being next door, received intense radioactive fall-out.

Belorussian parents, who formed an association called Autograph of Chernobyl, say that by 1 January 1996 1,012 children had been operated on in the Thyroid Gland Centre, 424 of them having thyroid cancer, and the number of sick children increases daily.

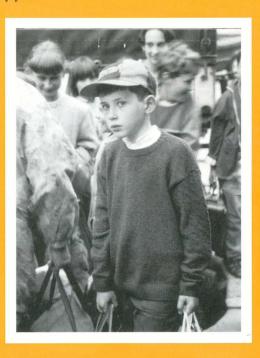
But Belarus does not have the resources alone to provide all that is necessary for their children. In their appeal they ask why, when there are so many Chernobyl organisations and funds, the children who need help are not getting it. And they challenge countries with nuclear energy to give positive help to Belarus, a country they say is a hostage of nuclear power.

An Autograph of Chernobyl spokesman said: "We must do everything to let our children smile and enjoy their lives."

Already Baptists throughout Europe are offering healthy holidays for children from the nuclear fallout blackspots around Chernobyl - among them Belarussian youngsters like the one pictured – by inviting them into their homes.

The Children of Chernobyl health improvement programme, run by the European Baptist Federation, arranges for groups of up to 30 children to be hosted for a month by Baptist churches and members.

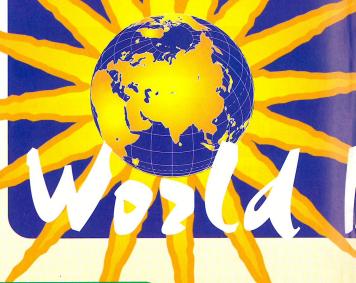
The 1996 programme has resulted in firm friendships which are expected to continue, at least by correspondence, for many years.



Phil's on the move

Phil Hindle, the BMS Co-ordinator for the South and West region, has moved to The Old Vicarage, East Lyng, Taunton, TA3 5AU. His telephone number is 01823 698977.





Around the churches

Dates for your diary you are organising a world mission event open to visitors, and you are organising a violin mission event open to visitors, and ould like it publicised in this diary, please let us have details at east three months in advance. Drop us a line at: Diary Dates, World Mission Link, BMS, PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA.

In the next three months BMS President Carolyn Green will be in the next three months pind Fredhein Calviyii Green win be visiting the West Country, Wales and Northern England meeting visiting the vest country, viales and northern England meeting church leaders and sharing in celebrations as part of her national

7 November at Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol tour At The Cutting Edge. 16 November at Albany Road, Cardiff

22 November a bi-lingual celebration at Penuel, Bangor 19 November at Carmarthen

29 November at Liverpool 11 January at South Parade, Leeds

Information on all the Presidential Tour meetings and celebrations 12 January at South Bank, Middlesborough can be obtained from the BMS Co-ordinators.

Saturday 2 November

Shropshire Missionary Council autumn meeting at Newport Details: Clifford Challiner 01743 790377

West of Scotland Women's Missionary Meeting, Adelaide Place BC, Glasgow

Details: Freda Kennedy 0141 6320883 Theme: India

Women's Missionary Fellowship meeting, St Stephen's Church Centre, Glasgow - celebrating the Ludhiana Centenary Details:Ann Durning 0141 6416248

Merseyside Annual Missionary Celebration nersoysuc ruman missionary ocientati Details: Merrill Morgan 0151 2560209

Sunday 24 November Oldham District Mission Day Details:Ann Lees 0161 6248957

Wednesday 4 December

Wednesday 4 December West of Scotland Women's Missionary Meeting, Adelaide Place BC, Glasgow Theme: Bangladesh Details: Freda Kennedy 0141 6320883

Aberdare Auxiliary Zenana Meeting, Bethel Chapel, Abernant, Aberdare Details: Margaret Picton 01685 876864



Bursting the target

Followers and Adventurers at Crofton Baptist Church, in Orpington, Kent, surprised themselves when they burst their WOW project target by 150%!

The fives to sevens and sevens to 10s groups have been working to raise money for the By His Stripes project to fund work at four Indian hospitals. The youngsters set a £,600 target and in September they sent BMS a cheque for £,900.

"We're delighted with this total," enthused Crofton's WOW co-ordinator Ursula Kemp. "The youngsters have worked hard to achieve this."

Much of the total - more than f_1120 – was raised at a bring and buy sale, the leftovers from which were sold every day at the church playgroup.

Children's Indian evening

Church members in Lytham St Anne's, Lancs, were transported to India by the young people at St Anne's Baptist Church.

As part of their support for the WOW Project, By His Stripes, they had organised an Indian evening and created a hospital in the church hall, using an idea from the project information book. They raised £110 towards the project.

During the evening visitors were able to take part in a tea tasting competition, visit an Indian tearoom, taste all kinds of Indian food and have a tour of the "hospital", guided by the children.

The youngsters who had created the hospital made sure they injected plenty of authenticity. Isobel Ferguson, the WOW co-ordinator at St Anne's, explained: "The Friends of Ludhiana and Vellore hospitals were good enough to allow us to borrow slides, videos and lots of pictures of both hospitals, so we had a lot of up-to-date relevant information."

When they weren't acting as hospital guides, youngsters took part in a competition to find the best dressed Indian boy and girl, and adults

Inspiration, motivation, ideas, news on world mission for churches...

Vission Link



enjoyed dressing in saris. An Indian story teller kept children and adults amused and young people took part in Indian games.

The WOW project aims to raise £,6,000 for four hospitals in India. By the end of September youngsters from churches throughout Britain had raised almost £4,000.

Outreach to a million

Westbourne Park Baptist Church was turned into an outdoor stage, an indoor entertainment area and was host to a team of 100 involved in mission to more than a million people at the Notting Hill Carnival in August.

It was truly an

From a missionary couple in training

'We are enjoying our time at college and the weeks are rushing by. When we last talked about Link-Up you said we would soon hear about our Link-Up groups. As we've not heard would soon near about our Link-up groups. As we've not no anything yet we wondered what was happening. If we don't make Link-Ups soon we won't be able to visit the groups before we leave the country"

"I'm writing about our Link-Up missionary. Our missionary retired at the beginning of the year and nothing seems to be happening to get a new Link-Up. At our last Church Meeting mappening to get a new concept. At our last column meetin many people said how unsatisfactory this was. We thought many people said now unsatisfactory uns was, we mought Link-Up was about communication - how can we communicate the days to be a supply to the latter than the control of t Link-up was about communication - now can we communic if we don't have a missionary? I'm having real difficulty in If we uon't have a missionary: I'm having real announ keeping our church interested in the idea of Link-Up."

Telephone call from a Link-Up Contact
"I'm sorry I've not got back to you about a new missionary
ink the but the basing real way." Link-Up but I'm having real problems in getting the churches in the group to meet or even get back to me to say what they think, I've written to everyone twice now and tried phoning, at tanner. I ve written to everyone twice now and tried phoning, a last I've managed to get a meeting arranged for next month I'm sorry its taking so long."

YES - Link-Up is about communication but not just between Churches and the Link-Up missionary, it is also about communication between the churches in the Link-Up group. When a Link-Up ends information is sent to the group so that a region a chirc-up ends information is sent to the group so that a new Link-Up can be made. The difficulty seems to be in getting the churches in the group to meet and agree what they want to seems to be in getting the churches in the group to meet and agree what they want to get as it should be. If do, somewhere the communication is not as it should be. If nothing seems to be happening in your group about getting a nothing seems to be happening in your group about securing a new missionary Link-Up get in touch with your Link-Up Contact. Talk to them. Ask if you can help in any way. Make sure your own church gives the meeting to discuss a new Link-Up

It really would be good for world mission if making a new nt reany would be good for world mission in making a new missionary Link-Up never took longer than three months -

Inquiries and feedback about Link-up may be addressed to :

Audrey Rowland World Mission Link Organiser

Telephone 01235 512077

international outreach. Organised by the national evangelistic organisation Viz-A-Viz, the One in a Million project team was made up of Philippinos, Brazilians and people

The team went into the carnival performing theatre, puppetry and street art. The team spoke with hundreds of people and many attended evangelistic events at the church.

from across the UK.

Dennis Pethers, of Viz-A-Viz, said: "There are very few places in the world where, for a few days, in excess of one million people are squeezed into a few square miles. This is an opportunity for the gospel that is too good to miss.'

Plans are underway for Carnival '97 and Viz-A-Viz are seeking to recruit a larger

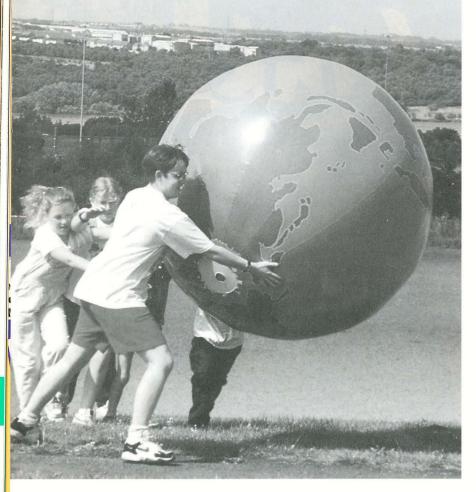
For further details contact: One in a Million on 01277 215222.

World Mission for Churches









WOW ... IT REALLY IS AMAZING HOW GOD CAN USE EVEN THE SMALLEST CHILD TO FULFIL HIS GREATEST COMMISSION. PHIL MARSDEN TOURED THE UK THIS SUMMER TAKING WOW ACTION DAYS TO EIGHT DIFFERENT LOCATIONS.

he aim was to teach children more about God's world and show them the important part they have to play in world mission. The WOW Action Team was made up of four ex-28:19 Action Team members and one of this year's 28:19 UK Action Team members and was headed up by Phil Marsden, the Youth and Children's Co-ordinator with the BMS.

Each day began at 10.00 am with

some lively songs and aerobics to make sure everyone was wide awake. Games, sketches, memory verses and a whole range of other activities followed.

After a quick picnic lunch the fast moving programme continued with a wide variety of outdoor activities ranging from football and ring-throwing to racing round assault courses with a giant earthball.

The children returned to base to meet their favourite WOW magazine

characters: Globetrotter, who brought postcards from around the world and got children to dress up in different country costumes, and Boomer who learned what it meant to be a missionary. Then came a clown who taught everyone Matthew 28:19 as a memory verse. We looked through a Window on Zimbabwe and pretended to squash into an African taxi, learned an African song, watched a puppet show with two very amusing birds and ended the day at 4.00 pm with a few party dances just to make sure all energy was now well and truly gone. The children went home excited, exhausted, but totally enthusiastic about world mission and with a greater understanding of what it meant to be a Christian and a missionary. A special WOW song was also created for the Action Days:

> **WOW** it's amazing WOW can't believe it WOW did you know that? No I didn't know that! **WOW** it's fantastic **Boingy like elastic** The wonderful world of WOW. Take a look through a Window on the World It's lots of fun and there's loads to learn About God's world and his mission for you To tell his people that he loves them too.

This even received a special radio broadcast when Radio Nottingham came over to do a live report on the WOW Action Day!

The children learned the importance of getting involved in world mission. They were encouraged to support missionaries through prayer, writing letters, fund-raising, etc and to be missionaries themselves by sharing their faith both at school and at home. It was great to hear small children praying for

SAMAZING

missionaries and whole countries and to see their faith as they prayed sincerely about specific situations. Hundreds of letters were written by the children to encourage our 28:19 Action Teams before they went overseas this year. Children gave testimonies about occasions when they had shared their faith and the good and bad responses they had had. Some told us about a friend who had now got involved in church because of their witnessing. Others told us of bullying they suffered at school because they had been open with their faith. All were encouraged to learn that they were true missionaries facing the joys and challenges that missionaries all around the world face each day, and the way one little girl's face lit up as we told her she was a missionary in her own school made it all worthwhile.

The WOW Action Days form just part of the BMS's new WOW club for children aged 6-13 years. The WOW magazine launched in January has seen subscriptions rise from around 4,000 to 8,000 in just six months. The WOW world maps together with the attractive colour stickers have been a real hit and material from the WOW Action Pack has been used to good effect in many churches around Britain. Plans for next year's WOW club activities are now well under way and children can look forward to receiving Globetrotter's special postcard album together with postcards from around the world during the year. A new WOW Action Pack is planned and WOW Action Days are set to hit Britain any time, any place, anywhere!

If you would like to host a WOW Action Day in your town let us know.



WOW GOODY BAGS

a new-comer to the group, heard the gospel so clearly.

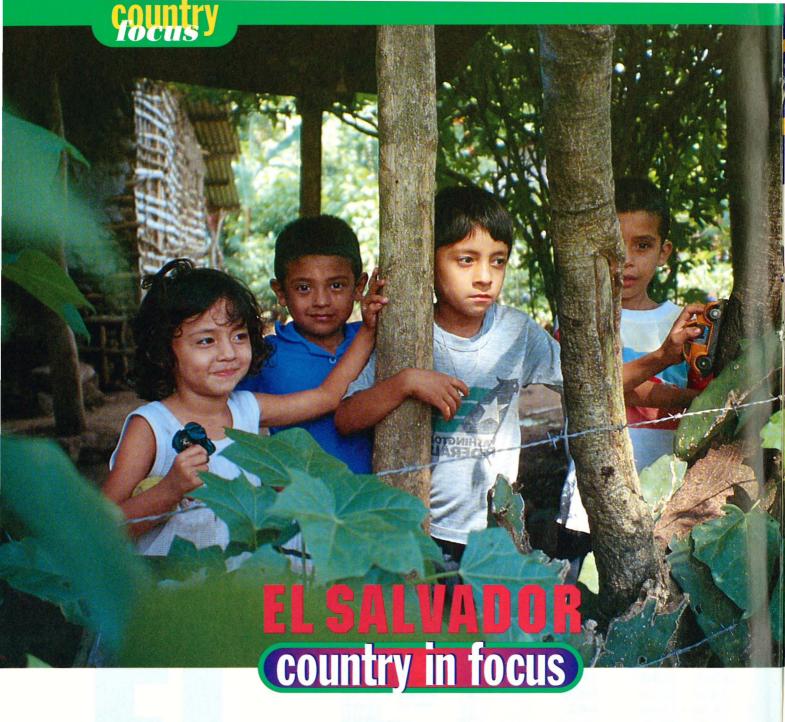
My own children haven't stopped talking about the day

since we journeyed over the Pennines on Tuesday. They particularly liked meeting the characters from the



magazine."

All children at the Action Days received a WOW pencil, badge, balloon and fluffy Globetrotter character. We have put together goody bags of WOW items which can be yours for £5.00 each. Each goody bag contains the four items mentioned above plus a T-shirt printed with the bright WOW logo. Please use a crossed cheque made out to "BMS" and state T-shirt size required (chest 80/84/88 cm) when ordering.



WHEN THE JEWEL HAS TARNISHED

EL SALVADOR is the smallest and most densely populated country in Central America with 256 people per sq. km. It lies between Guatemala to the west and Honduras to the north and east, with a coastal plain bordering the Pacific Ocean to the south. Beyond the coastal plain is a mountainous range which includes more than 20 volcanoes. Most of the country's towns and settlements are in the cooler, more temperate highlands rather than on the hot and humid coast.

In the 16th century the Spanish invaded the kingdom of the Pipal

Indians (related to the Aztecs) and called the territory they inhabited Cuscatlan or 'the Land of Jewels'. From then on it seems that internal and external conflicts have blighted this small nation.

The most recent power struggle has been a civil war that has lasted from 1979 - 92. As elsewhere in South America land had been unequally distributed with 90 per cent of the rural population owning only 20 per cent of the land. In 1994 the country's 60 leading families still owned 33 per cent of all the land, and this is land that is

used to grow coffee for export purposes. This recent civil war resulted in at least 80,000 people being killed and 550,000 people driven from their homes and a further 500,000 going into exile.

Though the majority of El Salvadoreans are Roman Catholic, the church opposed the oppressed and human rights abuses by the ruling minority in the civil war. This tension was highlighted when the Roman Catholic Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated by right-wingers in March 1980 while taking mass in the capital, San Salvador.



El Salvadorean children at play

The civil war has exacerbated many social problems. According to official figures 29 per cent of people were living in a state of poverty, and another 22 per cent in extreme poverty. Over 400,000 six year-old children suffer from chronic malnutrition. Unemployment stands at 24 per cent.

Of those who are in work almost 40 per cent work in agriculture, which generates about ten per cent of the national income. Coffee is the main export accounting for 45 - 50 per cent of the country's total export products, followed by cotton (declining), sugar (declining) and cotton textiles (increasing).

Of all the Latin American countries El Salvador has the greatest environmental problems. Deforestation has resulted in the elimination of 90 per cent of its vegetation, and only two per cent of its virgin forest is still intact. Two-thirds of the land suffers from erosion and 90 per cent of the rivers are polluted by sewage and chemicals.

So maybe El Salvador is a jewel no more. Maybe not. Today's peoples have only just begun to pick up the pieces after the years of civil war. The coming of peace has meant that now is the time

to rebuild a wounded people.

BMS personnel David and Rachel Quinney Mee are helping to do this. Based in San Salvador, David is involved in church work, and Rachel works with women's groups. Both spend a lot of time ministering to the poor.

Facts and figures El Salvador

Area: 21,400 sq km Capital: San Salvador, pop.1,522,000 Population: 5,943,000 (1995)

Estimate for year 2000: 6 million Annual population growth: 2.5% People groups: 89% mixed

descendants of American natives and Spanish colonizers (mestizo). 10% indigenous, 1% European. Religion: Catholic 75% (growth

0.8%), Protestant 21% (growth 5.9%), Foreign marginal eg Jehovah's Witnesses 2%, Nonreligious/other 2%

Languages: Spanish is the official and predominant langauge. Indigenous minorities speak Nahuatl.

Literacy: 76% male, 70% female Health: One doctor for every 2830 people Children per woman: 4.2 (1991) Under five mortality: 67 per 1000 (1991). Calorie consumption: 102% of required



\Fact

This recent civil war resulted in at least 80,000 people being killed and 550,000 people driven from their homes and a further 500,000 going into exile.



Preparing for a campaign



To twin or not to twin...?

Keith Nichols reflects on the merits or otherwise of twinning with a Third World church

OUR VISIT to El Cordero de Dios Baptist Church, San Salvador, El Salvador was in reply to a visit to Didcot Baptist Church three years ago, of the then pastor of El Cordero. It seemed to take that amount of time for us to respond, and plan our return visit.

As we set out, Mike (Deacon for Mission), Angela (Church member, very involved in the community and previously Deacon for Community and Social Action) and myself (minister) had very little idea of what our two and a half weeks in El Salvador would actually entail. The programme of our visit was put together by El Cordero and took in visits to projects, people and regions throughout El Salvador and even Guatemala. On several days this programme kept us busy from as early as 6.00 am until 9.30 pm at night!

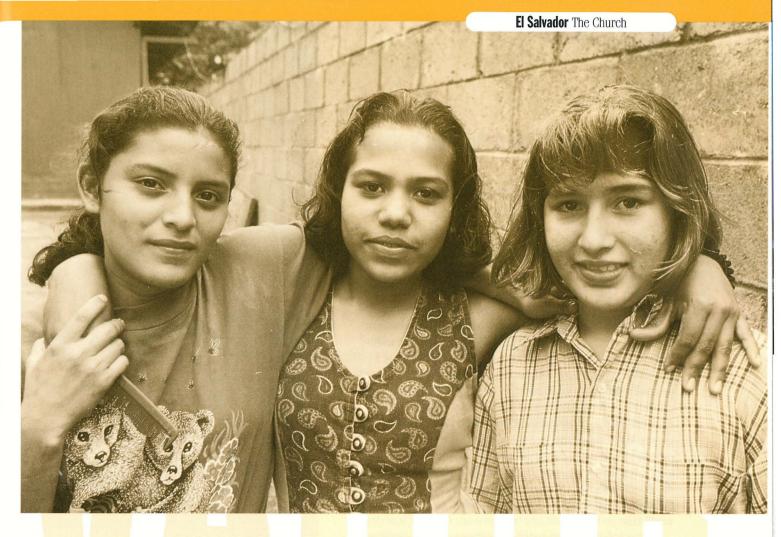
Now we're back we feel we're very educated as to the people, culture, faith and country of El Salvador, and the life and members of El Cordero de Dios.

And furthermore I can only highly recommend such twinning arrangements, provided they come from a genuine God-guided interest, that will be sustained, on a basis of equal status with the overseas church, and a readiness to receive far more than we can ever give.









Home is where the heart is

MIKE QUANTICK RELATES SOMETHING OF HIS EXPERIENCE OF EL SALVADOREAN HOSPITALITY.

EL CORDERO DE DIOS (or Lamb of God) is a small Baptist church in Zacamil, a poorer part of San Salvador, the capital of El Salvador. It's a small church with a regular worshipping congregation of about thirty to forty. Didcot Baptist Church established a twinning link with them in 1994.

Recently I was part of a small delegation visiting this church from Didcot church. The first thing to hit me as I arrived in this country, where people are still in a state of shock after the war, was the generosity and genuine appreciation of our visit given us by the people. Even as we stepped out of the airport into David Quinney Mee's jeep the church members had written a message of welcome in the dirt of the back window.

We all stayed in the homes of different church members. My host was Vilma who lived with her daughter Noemi and sons Misael and Juan José in a small ground floor multi family flat.

None of them spoke English! The flat itself consisted of a small lounge area, a dining/kitchen area, toilet/shower and three small bedrooms. I was given Noemi's bedroom, which had two single beds, a hammock as well as a sewing machine and what appeared to be an ironing table, and she was relegated to the lounge. It was not long before I discovered their flat was open house to the extended family and other church members who often stayed overnight. The second Tuesday proved to be such a case when Noemi's cousin Jenny came to stay for the night - in the spare bed in my room! The next morning there were even more surprises: Jenny decided my hair needed cutting and appeared with a large pair of scissors and a razor. It was only later I discovered she had done a course in hairdressing!

It was not only church members who gave us hospitality. One particular community stays in my mind, that of San Roque, which was made up of much poorer people living in almost slum conditions on the side of a volcano at the back of El Cordero church. Most of the people here did not have a job, or like Carmen and Rufinio who lived in a corrugated iron construction they were trying to eke out a living, in this case, by making tortillas. But even here we were offered something to eat or drink, and it was here we had our first taste of atol, a white milky drink made from boiled maize.

So often on trips like this the visitor goes mentally prepared for all the facts and figures that will be taken in along the way. What I was not prepared for were things like how much the people had to teach us, in this case, about the ministry of hospitality. Again and again as we visited different communities within San Salvador and in other parts of the country – wherever we went, those we met were anxious to offer us something from the little they had. •

Images from El Salvador. Pictures by Mike Quantick.

After the war — the visitor's view



THE HOSTILITIES between the FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front) and the government forces came to an end with the signing of the "Peace Accord" in 1992. The FMLN under UN supervision disarmed, and rebel forces returned to their usual routines of life. In the rural setting guerilla and non-guerilla are indis-

tinguishable to the eye of the visitor, although in the city I was led to believe party allegiance still greatly affects promotion and war maimed find places to beg.

Although the Peace Accord promised to address the essential causes of the civil war, especially the possession of a great proportion of the land by only a small percentage of people, very little has actually changed. Thus continues the insecurity, the trap of poverty for many in rural settings and the development of shanty towns on the edges of San Salvador the capital that equal the slums of any two-third world city.

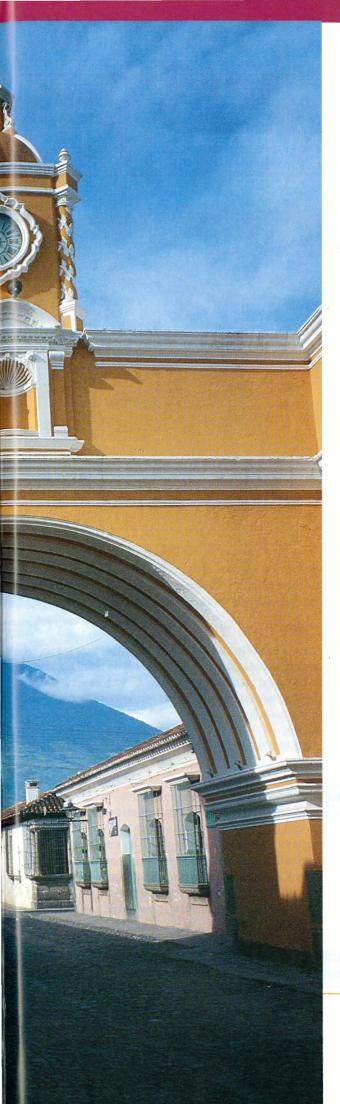
There is left an overwhelming tiredness from the civil war and a communal war psychosis that is yet to be meaningfully addressed. In some communities an ongoing weight, not of bitterness, resentment or revenge, but of sadness that great social and economic injustices are yet to be properly addressed, can almost be felt.

Time spent speaking

- to an unemployed male in the slum of San Roque, a community perched on the volcanic slopes on the side of San Salvador, where he and his family were about to be evicted from their bamboo and corrugated iron home
- to an adolescent male in another community within the capital seeking to escape the subculture of despair, drugs and violence
- to pastors, both male and female, desperate to know how to meaningfully pastor those in the grip of rural poverty and survive themselves on the meagre support their congregations could give
- have all left their imprint on the conscience. But no impact is as great as that left by the dignity, generosity, hospitality, open-heartedness and willingness to tell their story of even the poorest, oldest, or frailest that we had the privilege to meet.

Keith Nichols is senior minister of Didcot Baptist Church, Oxfordshire.





Little space for optimism

FORTY DISPASSIONATE words in the morning newspaper told of murder. A man resisting a car theft was shot through the heart in front of the home of a family from our church.

With shaken words they broke the news to the man's wife – by telephone.

How many words are needed to speak for the broken lives behind the statistics? Thirty six per cent more violent deaths are recorded here per year than at any time during El Salvador's war.

The United Nations' latest report on the Salvadoran peace process was some 3,000 words short, leaving little space for optimism. Public (in)security is a highlighted concern. The National Civil Police, formed in the hopefulness of the peace accords, are now in danger of "losing their identity as an institution at the service of the community and becoming a new instrument of power prone to authoritarianism and no longer accountable to the people".

The concerns raised in the report, and the government's contempt for both the concerns and their authors, offer little confidence in the sincerity of official interest in democracy.

Elections next March mean politicians are now preparing their words to try to persuade increasingly disillusioned voters to try again. Some churches will play an education role, helping citizens register and know where, and how, to cast a vote.

Who to vote for becomes less simple.

Much more than bricks came down with the Berlin Wall. Old left-right slogans and "political correctness" are weighed in the balance and found wanting. While issues as deeply rooted as steadily-growing poverty and social exclusion demand equally radical responses, they must go beyond tired ideologies, generating real change in human lives.

Shifting boundaries demand new partnerships and creative, lateral thinking.

Can secular and sacred learn to dream together and dare to make our best Word flesh?



David Quinney-Mee







Improving outreach to non-**Christian** men

So how good is your church in attracting and keeping men?

Attracting men

List all the events your church holds that are:

- Entirely and unashamedly evangelistic.
- Friendship evangelism-orientated, to which you are encouraged to bring friends and neighbours.
- Directed at non-Christians.

How many of these are specifically for men to come to know the Lord?

How many non-Christian men have a link with your church fellowship?

For example: non-Christian husbands of Christian wives, non-Christian fathers of toddler group, pre-school playgroup and Sunday school children.

Does your church have a strategy to reach these men?

What could your church do to improve its outreach to non-Christian men?

Think about <u>places</u>: the church building is probably <u>not</u> the best place. Choose somewhere that's neutral territory and where non-Christian men will feel comfortable. Use someone's home, hire a room in a pub or a

Think about timing: does the time you've chosen fit your schedule but actually means that the person you're inviting will have to miss a football match on TV or their badminton evening?

Think about what to do. find out all you can about the hobbies, interests and other leisure pursuits of those you're inviting. Christians can sometimes be couch potatoes, and you may be surprised how athletic and enterprising your non-Christian friends are!

Think about <u>ratios</u> between the Christians and the non-Christians

you're inviting: if there's only one non-Christian there will they feel threatened and that everyone is getting at them. If there's only one Christian you will have problems if everyone wants to make a commitment there and then - although that's a nice problem to have!

Just for a minute...

Imagine you're a non-Christian man, who's been dragged along to a Sunday family service by your newly-converted wife. Forget all about the church's history and traditions; forget all the resolutions passed at church meetings about the colour of the curtains; even forget the Christian baggage that has built up concerning this building and what you do in it week by week.

Try to come to this service as if it's all totally new and you have no preconceptions.

What would your reactions be to the following?:

- Posters around the place.
 - Are they advertising things for women, men, children or all three?
- The Furniture

Does it look like it would be more at home in an architectural restoration vard? Is it better or worse that an average person would have in their home? Are the chairs comfortable? Is there enough knee room?

- The general state of repair or disrepair of the building and furniture. Does this say anything about the number of men around to keep the church looking good? (Sorry . . . but it's usually the men who do church maintenance)
- People coming in for the service.

Do they acknowledge one another? Do they greet you? Do they fill up the back seats first which makes you wonder: is there something your wife hasn't told you?



- The rather straight people emerging from a room at the side just before the service starts? Are they the hierarchy? What have they been doing exchanging commiserations over how they did in the National Lottery or having a quick smoke?

 The ROWL that's passed round halfway through
- The BOWL that's passed round halfway through.
 Is it for helping yourself to some small change for the parking meter that's about to run out?
- The <u>family service talk</u>.
 Who's it aimed at? Do these adults always listen to kidstuff?

And lastly...

How much do you want these male contacts in your church to come to know the Lord? Would having more (keen, motivated, enthusiastic) men around be a bit threatening for other old timers?

Keeping men

Study your church membership list, and create two tables, one for the present day and one for 10 years ago. Divide each into male and female, and ages categories, to look something like this:

Age group	Male	Female	
			×
20s			
30s			
40s			
50s			
20s 30s 40s 50s 60s 70s+			
70s+			
TOTAL			

Proportionally do you have more men in the church now, or less? Has the age grouping in which these men have been allocated altered? What does this tell?

As you pray for those overseas, missionaries and nationals. Also remember those at home and <u>in your congregation</u> who are facing crises. Remember men and women both in the world of work, and unemployment, where they can be facing untold pressures, and life is cutthroat and stressful.

You and the male link missionary

Next time you write ask him if there's any particular pressures or problems that occur because of something in the (probably male dominated) national culture. This may mean things are even worse for his wife! Whatever the answer <u>pray</u> for them!

Fact

The percentage of people attending church was:

1979 45% men 55% women **1989** 42% men 58% women

Source: Marc Europe

"There is evidence to suggest that as the proportion of women in a church increases so it becomes more difficult for the uncommitted man to start attending that church." Derek Cook



WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Worldwide women are gradually having their eyes opened and gaining a real sense of achievement in doing something that the vast majority of us take for granted: learning to read and write.

Katie Norris, BMS missionary in Nepal, works with the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) helping women by opening their eyes to a whole new world by setting up literacy projects and helping local people to teach their own literacy classes in their villages.

These local people are called facilitators and they receive their training at the nearest UMN project centre. Classes are usually free but those attending are expected to contribute a small sum (about 3p) which goes into a fund to be used when a need arises. Each class is supplied by the UMN project with a blackboard, chalk, a set of literacy books for each class member and a kerosene lamp.

It's difficult to imagine what it must feel like to be able to write your own name instead of putting a thumb print when a signature is required. And then the door is opened to being able to read simple documents, and then more - health and hygiene leaflets, help with finance schemes, instructions on seed packets and ultimately being able to read God's Word. Encourage Katie in what she's doing, by sending this month's card to her. Or write a simple message to the women in Nepal involved in gaining self esteem through literacy projects by writing c/o Katie. The address is: PO Box 126, Kathmandu, Nepal.

I was sad to read the letter from your unnamed correspondent who had attended Walthamstow Hall sixty years ago and been bitterly unhappy. I suppose some children were disturbed by the experience of being uprooted from their missionary families, and the régime, including the medical treatment for ringworm, would certainly seem harsh to modern eyes.

Nonetheless, many old girls of the era did find the school a source of strength and have happy, affectionate memories of it as their home. They prove it by keeping in close touch and returning often, and I should like to extend, through you, a warm invitation to that unhappy Old Girl to come and visit us and perhaps exorcise her nightmares.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S J Lang Headmistress

Discovering stre

"There is no way we'

ren't those famous, well-used bits of the Bible excellent! You know, the bits you've heard so often that, heaven forbid, you may even know off by heart.

And yet this familiarity leads to apathy. 1 Cor 2:10 says: "That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

But you don't actually expect me to believe that. Come on!

It was September 1995, and the four of us landed in Trinidad, our minds awash with ideas and preconceptions. In truth, we weren't all that daunted. Trinidad is hardly a mission field unless your idea of mission is reaching bikini clad models eating Bounty bars.

The idea of front line mission work had seemed a bit too daunting and we breathed a sigh of relief at having drawn the easy number in Trinidad.

So it was with an air of naive self-assurance that we fumbled our way through customs. But it was about this stage that the hazy dream of silver sands and clear blue seas began to fade, to be replaced by an alarming reality.

Trinidad is the only Caribbean island not to have followed the path of tourism.

The oil industry dominates its economy. Beautiful beaches are sometimes spoiled by oily water. Despite this industry,

providing affluence for a few, one in four Trinis remain jobless. Children who fail an exam at the end of primary school are simply unable to attend high school.

Like the rest of the Caribbean, a serious drug problem has led to a violent society, giving Trinidad one of the highest murder rates in the world. Poverty is widespread with one-fifth of the country living below the UN's poverty line.

Hardly paradise! Still, that needn't affect us.

Our arrival in Trinidad was heralded by a crescendo of disinterest. No hero's welcome or packed itinerary!

David and Daryl found

themselves living in the spare room of an old people's home. Old people's homes in Trinidad are not the well run, hygienic establishments found in Britain and the boys had to live with the discom-

fort and illness of elderly people.

By the third week: "There is no way we'll cope," was the thought on our minds. "How on earth is God going to use us here?"

Then there was an amazing turn-

around.

The realisation dawned on us that we actually had everything we needed. Once we had swallowed our pride, the old people's home became, well, home. The nurses spoiled us and the old people loved the company of strange foreigners. And when the time came for the whole team to move to an apartment, it was with great sadness.

But there was still no work, and no real promise of any. We fought against the obvious solution to this dilemma – that we should initiate work ourselves – for as long as possible.

A week later, after effort

inspired more out of hollow bravado than anything else, we found our weeks jampacked with work. People were in desperate need of help and very enthusiastic to have our services. David and Anna worked each day in Cowen Hamilton High School teaching history and drama respectively. Daryl and Angela founded a remedial class in the nearby primary school.

At the weekends, Sundays were spent travelling to various Baptist churches in Trinidad, leading services. Friday and Saturday evenings were used to put on youth nights.

Almost overnight we had gone from having nothing to do to being very busy.

But volunteering our services to all and sundry brought its own feelings of inadequacy. What did we know about teaching, preaching or drama? People spend years learning to do these jobs. We hadn't anticipated being thrown in at the deep end like this.

A wonderful and amazing thing happened. God worked.

Not only did we cope with teaching but we were able to start a Youth for





cope"

Christ group which grew to 60 in number, and through which children were saved.

PAY 1068

Children who couldn't read previously, learned.

Youths, bored at church, were encouraged to see that church could be fun and challenging.

Sermons were preached, often with no notice, and somehow people were touched.

Friends were made and bridges built. God worked through four inadequate and weak individuals.

Aren't those famous, wellused bits of the Bible excellent? "For when I am weak, then I am strong." What an outrageous claim. Yet the bizarre thing is that it is completely true.

If familiarity has bred apathy and doubt in you, then just ask four weak, incapable young people who spent six months in Trinidad and they'll persuade you to reconsider.

One thing, though, we never did find that Bounty bar model. What do you mean "that's not mission work?" Don't be so short-sighted!

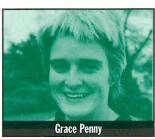
The BMS 28:19 Trinidad Action Team — Daryl Milford, Anna Wallace, David Young, Angela Richardson.

"There is no way we ll cope," was the thought on our minds. "How on earth is God going to use us here?"

prayerfocus

A regular update from BMS colleagues around the world compiled by Sam Gibson

Asia



KISC, the Kathmandu International Study Centre, provides education for young people from UMN (United Mission to Nepal) and INF (International Nepal Fellowship) families.

Grace teaches Geography and P.E. at KISC and is involved in other youth work out of school hours.

The new school year started in September along with a new principal, Gerald Harley, from New Zealand. While Gerald is settling in well, staffing the school is a constant struggle and new staff are required for next year.

Please pray:

- for Gerald, Grace and all KISC staff in this new academic vear
- for new teaching staff to come forward for service next year



Carole works at a girl's hostel in Balangir in the East of India. The hostel has recently taken in fifteen new girls to replace those of an age to leave. The girls are given a formal education, many taking High School Certificate examinations and some going on to further education and nursing courses.

In July, Daud Sagar, a Christian lecturer was arrested and thrown into jail for 43 days before being released on bail; he had been acting as Chief Examiner for some college exams during the summer. Mistakes had been made in the marking of the exams and Daud, the assistant examiner and a scrutiniser were charged with conspiracy. Daud has many supporters and there is no proof to support the case, which is pending in the High

It is well known that the others involved in this case are very anti-Christian but thank God, whilst in



Andrew and Michelle Furber

The Furbers have been in Tansen for just under a year. Andrew is enjoying his job as a medical officer at Palpa Community Health and Development Programme (CHDP), supervising training courses for local health workers and also in the mission hospital in Tansen. Andrew's work involves travelling around the Palpa district mainly visiting government health posts.

Over the last few months, he and Michelle have been getting to know people in Tansen a little better and are making Nepalese and expatriate friends, although with people always coming and going, losing and making new friends can take its toll.

Michelle is teaching English to three Nepalis and one Japanese lady. She receives constant requests for these classes and finds it difficult to know who to take on and who to refuse. Michelle ran a Sunday school training day for teachers at the Nepali church she and Andrew attend, and this was well received. She is also a supply teacher in a school for missionaries' children and is busy doing design work for a Tansen cross-stitch group, set up for local women to generate income for themselves.

Please pray:

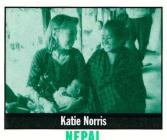
- few Nepali doctors stay long at Tansen hospital with more lucrative offers elsewhere. There is a shortage and the hospital is looking for volunteers.
- wisdom for Michelle in allocating places on her English course.

Balangir jail, Daud says he became very much more aware of the plight of the other prisoners and through him, the Christian community are becoming more aware of ways in which they can help these people.

Please pray:

· for the hostel girls and staff working long hours

- that justice be done in Daud's case and that any malicious accusations be brought into the light
- that God would use this case to raise up a ministry to those in prison
- safety for Carole as she travels to and from Vellore with various girls to take tests, attend interviews and place applications for nursing courses



Katie began her first term of service in Nepal in April this year. She is based in Jumla but works with the Karnali Community Skill Training (KCST) extension office, a five hour walk away.

Recently, Katie has been involved in a programme to enable local people to teach literacy classes to 8-14 year olds in their own villages. Most children do not have time to attend nearby schools as they need to work in the fields and graze cattle.

The classes teach children to read, write, simple maths and about health care and other common life issues, such as the disadvantages of child marriage.

Jumla is thought of by outsiders as being a remote, backward and very poor area. It is hoped that these classes

and other community development initiatives will help the people to develop a more positive image for themselves and see that change does not have to come from outside aid but is something they can work towards for themselves.

Please pray:

- after living in a close knit village community, Katie has found it more difficult to get to know people in Jumla, pray she makes good friends quickly
- for safety and speed as Katie travels by plane and on

Europe



ALBANIA

Paul and Elisabeth who have been in Albania since April 1995, are completing language

study and moving more into pastoral ministry. Much of Paul's time is taken up with the Albanian Bible Institute (ABI) which began teaching on 30 September.

This is a school for training church leaders and is a joint venture between several missions and churches.

ABI began with 15 students and Paul is involved in their training. Elisabeth is very busy looking after their four children aged 9, 7, 6 and 2, a hard enough job for anyone but made more difficult as everyday jobs are not straight forward in Albania.

Even the shopping involves visits to many different stalls and tiny shops and the condition of the roads does not make use of a buggy easy.

The advantage of slow and frequent shopping trips however is that Elisabeth is able to meet many people and build relationships with locals.

The language is still difficult and while Elisabeth can communicate adequately, she strives to be more accurate. For the past year, Elisabeth has been running a mums' and toddlers' group.

This will now be taken over by another missionary while Elizabeth continues to develop a small playgroup set up with some other parents.

This provides an excellent opportunity for outreach among embassy and aid agency staff as well as being a real benefit for Paul and Elisabeth's son, Phillip, who is able to mix with other children his own age.

Please pray:

- for staff and students settling into the first term at
- for practical arrangements, ABI moved into its building just a few weeks before the beginning of the term
- for progress with the language - Elisabeth does not receive formal teaching
- · for friendships and conversations
- for guidance on church involvement and future work

BMS 28:19 Action Teams

Thirty two young people in eight teams are now several weeks into their assignments in the UK, Jamaica, Brazil, Thailand, Nepal, Portugal, Malta and Zimbabwe. Please pray for them as they settle in and begin work. Most are homesick and some have new languages to learn.

Please pray for each team.

- James, Polly, Dilshan and Kimia working with BMS in the UK on the Get Real youth roadshow. Steven, Jo, Ruth and Matt with the Jamaica Baptist Union on rural projects in St Mary's and Hanover.
- Esther, Catherine, Sarah

 Jo and Laura working alongside BMS missionaries David and Cath Meikle in the favelas of Sao Paulo. ● Leigh, Ellen, Jennie and Sarah with Jacqui Wells in Thailand working with the Karen hill tribe people and at the New Life Centre for girls in danger. • Chris, Ed, Emma and Helen in Nepal helping United Mission to Nepal (UMN) with church work, teaching English and children's conference programmes. • Liz, David, James and Charlotte in Portugal supporting the Baptist church in Portimao in its youth outreach. • Darrel, Mhairi, Catherine and Simon involved in evangelism and open air work across the island of Malta. • Alex, Fiona, Emma and David working with the churches of the National Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe.

Albania

prayerfocus

America



The Myhills have a boat ministry amongst the island communities in the Paranagua Bay and isolated coastal villages in southern Brazil. Gerry is building a small house on the island of Ilha Rasa where he can store his things, make a drink, have a shower and sleep in comfort when travelling around. In addition to a bathroom for himself, he also plans to build two extra toilet units for the use of the church in the hope that it will encourage people in the community to copy the idea for themselves. Hygiene and toilet facilities are not a high priority for the island people. Verci, the young man who lost his wife Mairleia in an electrical storm on the island as reported in June, is considering remarrying. His future second wife Teresinha recently became a Christian and has asked for baptism.

Please pray:

- that Gerry's house becomes a useful resource for the church and encourages people to see the importance of hygiene
- for Verci, his young son and possible new wife. Thank

God that this young man has been able to pick up the pieces and get on with his life after the loss of Mairleia



Colin and Marcia work with a church planting and social project in Eldorado do Sol in the south of Brazil. They have found starting a new church very hard work but are also thrilled to see God working in people's lives. In June they baptised the first four new members into the church, increasing membership to ten, and several more people look set to join this year. The church has one meeting on a Sunday evening and most weeks, a music group from its mother church lead worship. The congregation is looking for someone in Eldorado who can meet their musical needs. A Tuesday evening meeting, meant to be an adult prayer and Bible study, is usually also attended by around 30 children. Some people in the mother church feel this is not right but the children love going and many are believing in Jesus and having their lives changed. At a holiday club held in July, 25 children accepted Jesus into their lives and most are now attending church regularly. A further

programme the Pavitts run is individual Bible studies presenting the Gospel to people in their own homes, over a period of seven weeks. During the third lesson, people are asked to make a decision to accept faith in Jesus or not and, thank God, the Pavitts have found that most people accept. A team of 25 Americans arrived in September to build 12 small houses on land purchased earlier in the year for a church building. The church agreed to build these houses as part of the deal for purchasing the land. The main church building is not yet complete making services difficult due the need to move around and dust etc.

Please pray:

- for continued growth in membership of this new church
- for someone who lives in Eldorado to come forward to play music
- thank God for the children whose lives are being touched. Pray for a suitable ministry and people to support the children as they get to know more about their new found faith.
- for the building work
- for the Pavitt family. Colin and Marcia are often very tired as they have so much work to do. Pray God would add and raise people up within the church to carry new ministries forward.



BRAZIL

The Greenwoods were reminded of God's love and protection over them one night just before June. Suzana got into their car to park it in the garage and a gunman got in beside her. Obeying his orders she got out and he drove off. At that moment, Suzana says she felt the Lord's protection most strongly and the next day the car was found safely abandoned for the Greenwoods to collect.

Please pray:

- for God's continued protection of the Greenwoods and all missionary personnel
- for strength and extra co-workers as the Greenwoods have felt burdened with a great deal of work recently





After two years of temporary principals, a long term leader has been found for the Cuiaba Baptist Seminary at which Mike is a Director. Pastor Walter comes from the church in Mirassol D'Oesta, 200 miles from Cuiaba and his wife, who has a theology degree, is also keen to be involved in teaching at the Seminary. Mike has handed over several of the jobs he was doing at the Seminary to Professor Denise Alves who took over as Academic Dean in August. She teaches Study Methods at the Seminary, supervises the final year dissertations and is currently working on an expansion of the curriculum for 1997 to include the option of specialising in Religious Education. Mike continues with finance, employee relations and general management as well as being heavily involved in launching a second leadership course. The first saw 28 lay people from the Cuiaba churches receiving diplomas after completing the ten week course. Beside its basic degree students, the Seminary this year has been able to give basic training in

Christian service to 57 members of 15 of the 17 Cuiaba Baptist churches. Jean is very involved in counselling students with their problems which include health (of students and their families), financial difficulties and marital stress. The couple fly back to the UK next month on Home Assignment.

Please pray:

- for Pastor Walter and Denise Alves, that they settle quickly to their new roles leading the Seminary forward
- for Mike as he gets used to a slightly altered role
- a safe journey for Mike and Jean back to the UK and for a refreshing time on Home Assignment



Stan and Maureen Porter

A good missionary needs to be able to cope with the unexpected. That's why, when the Porters arrived at Jardim Olinda Pre-school to find a wake in full swing, they were not overtly worried!

No one knew how the people had managed to get in to the building and set the classroom out as a chapel of rest, but the body, surrounded by candles and weeping family, was there for the next few hours. One of the children was temporarily lost but soon located again underneath the coffin (it was resting on chairs). He wanted to know who, what and why about the dead lady!

Maureen has the task of overseeing this favela school, initially set up by BMS missionary Stuart Christine and now run by Compassion International. Ten pre-schools operate around the city of Sao Paulo. BMS nurse Mary Parsons recently visited the schools and some families to establish a network of health workers from some of the Baptist churches in the hope of helping teachers and parents learn more about health education, nutrition, how to recognise eye, teeth and skin problems and if a child is underweight.

- it is planned that the children at Jardim Olinda be able to progress into 'proper' school on the same site, pray for this project
- that the health worker project meets its ambitious aims
- for the education of the children to enable them to lead a better and healthier life than their present situation allows
- health and safety in travel for Stan and Maureen

Departures Adrian and Sylvia Hopkins to Bangui

David Martin to Sri Lanka and India John Passmore to Italy Derek Rumbol to Zaire and South Africa Phil Hindle to Zaire Delyth Wyn Davies to Zaire

Legacies

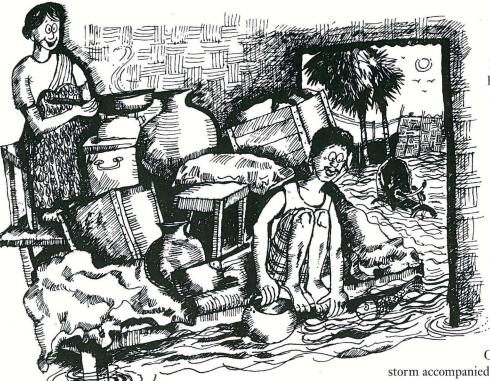
From July to September

We are grateful for the support of those who remember

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For supporters who are considering bequests to the BMS, we can supply a helpful information leaflet, Making a Will.





only a few feet above sea level. Although cities and towns are growing, most of the 100 million plus people live in villages, in houses with walls made either of mud or woven bamboo.

The walls are put on an earth plinth to raise them above ground level. When excavating the mud for the foundation, a hole is formed and this then fills with rain to become a pond. Hence there are ponds in every village and often outside every large house. As these ponds are often the only source of water for a large area they get used for all purposes for which water is required - cooking, washing clothes, bathing, (people and buffalo) sometimes drinking in the dry season – and are also used for breeding fish, that being a favourite ingredient in curry to accompany the rice.

One morning, after a particularly potent storm accompanied by hours of stair rod rain, I asked a local Christian how they had fared. Terrible, they said with a broad

Water water John Passmore takes a sideways view

ying in my bed, secure and warm, listening to the rain hitting the roof and filling the water butts while the wind roars and the lightning illuminates the room has to be one of my most satisfying experiences. Lying in my tent recently, with the storm raging, was not so comfortable.

A good job we'd taken the precaution of putting it up at home before the holiday to apply a coat of proofer. Would the seams hold out and the pegs? After all they were only pushed into sand. Everything felt damp and with the noise of flapping canvas there was no chance of sleep. Added to that I was saturated, having been out to check the pegs and the channel, dug around the tent to carry away surface water and divert it from flooding the plot lower down the slope! Still, hopefully, tomorrow the sun will shine and everything can be dried out.

That thunder storm in France lasted all night and the wind and rain continued through the next day. The tropical storms we experienced in Bangladesh sometimes went on for days and the monsoon brings rain every day for months on end. The rain and floods though are needed and without them the rice crop could not be grown.

Though the floods in the fields were necessary, too much rain often submerged whole areas – fields, homes and roads under feet of water. After the storm on the campsite some tents were so badly damaged, the folk had to leave but at least they had a home to go to. Tropical storms frequently flatten or flood people's homes leaving them nowhere to go.

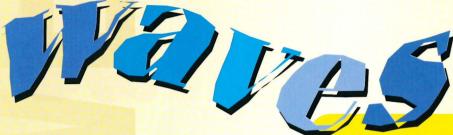
The vast majority of Bangladesh is a flat river delta consisting of earth and sand with no rocks, the whole being

grin. How so I enquired? Well, the whole area in which they lived had been flooded and it was so deep it had come up over the house plinth. They had to pile all their possessions on the bed to keep them out of the flood water. The bed itself was a sturdy wood construction with its feet on bricks so they were safe, if marooned, on their own island. They had not been able to get to the market to buy anything for supper so it was going to be just rice. This was cooked on a kerosene stove also balanced on the bed.

I was getting the sorry picture but it didn't explain the grin. As the rice bubbled away and they lamented their plight with the water swirling in the front door, and out through the loosely woven bamboo walls they noticed a disturbance in the flow and there in their house, just about to go under the bed, was a large fish! Having escaped from its pond and enjoyed a short lived freedom it was now on its way to being a free meal for the family. No wonder they were smiling.

They then went on to explain how the flood really helped the poorer people. At first I couldn't see how this could be so but the explanation made sense. "You see," they said, "it's only the rich people who can afford to stock their ponds with good fish fry, but when the flood comes everybody's ponds are submerged. All the fish escape. Then when the flood subsides the fish end up in a different pond, usually someone else's, and there is a much fairer distribution. So the poor man gets the fish from the rich man's pond!"

> John Passmore, BMS Europe Representative, was a missionary in Bangladesh for 10 years.



WHO'S IN THE REAL WORLD?

How does our culture treat men and is this treatment changing?

I have observed how in the world of advertising men are gradually taking over the domestic scene. Two adverts have in particular caught

Many of you will have seen the cheery chap who stalks the streets of suburbia clutching a huge box of washing powder. He knocks on the door of a house hoping to change the life of the woman who lives there. I would never dream of letting him in, but fortunately he has knocked on the door of a more charitable woman who not only allows him to enter but makes him a coffee to drink while she washes the family's whites. The cheery chap is proved right. Her whites are much brighter than before. Her life will never by the same again.

What do you make of the man in the second advertisement who pretends to love and care for his wife while all the time withholding the secret of easily cleaned baths and floors? When she cleans she has to get down on her knees and scrub. She probably makes regular

> visits to the osteopath. He withholds this secret knowledge because her gratitude and admiration are far too useful and flattering.

Why don't these women know better?

How do these media men know the secret of whiter whites and gleaming floors?

Well they have more time to watch television!

Women are far too busy out in the real world running hospital coffee shops, caring for sick neighbours, shopping for the elderly, looking after children, running businesses, banks, schools, organising churches, working

as missionary secretaries, etc, etc.

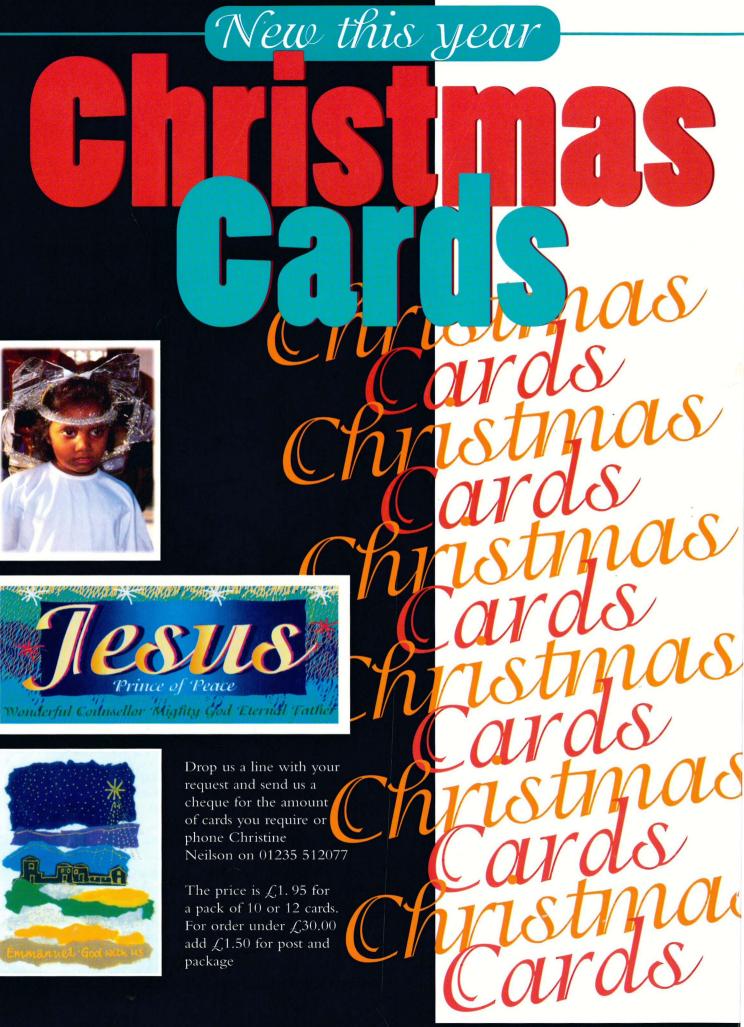
Is our culture changing the way it treats men? Not really. Who shapes culture? Who shapes the media?

The church, like the world at large, still relies on the good service, good will and goodness of women who live out their faith in love for God and service to others. Many men in our churches honour and respect the women who worship with them. Sadly, there are still those who do not: those who patronise women believing, like the media men, that they know best.

Thank God for counter-culture men – men who recognise the advantages they receive in our culture and who long for this to change. Thank God for those men in our churches and in society who will speak out to challenge and correct the way culture has treated them and who, in doing so, are becoming whole people themselves.

The Revd Vivienne Lassetter is minister at Sion Baptist Church, Burnley Lanc, and is married to Greg.





nutting a little extra into world missio

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